Experiences of the Left in Power: State Formation, Class Formation and the Production of Space in Urban Bolivia

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, under the supervision of Dr Jeffery Webber, School of Politics and International Relations, Queen Mary University of London

January 2019

Statement of Originality

I, Angus McNelly, confirm that the research included within this thesis is my own work or that where it has been carried out in collaboration with, or supported by others, that this is duly acknowledged below and my contribution indicated. Previously published material is also acknowledged below.

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Angus McNelly
21 January 2019

Details of collaboration:

- Transcription of recorded interviews by Feliza Ali Ramos, Dafne Lopez, Sayuri Loza and Valeria (January to April 2018)
- Maps by Alejandra Rocabado (January 2019)
- Proofreading by Angela McNelly (January 2019)

Published materials:

- McNelly, A., 2017. The contours of Gramscian theory in Bolivia: From government rhetoric to radical critique. *Constellations*, 24, pp.432–446.

- McNelly, A., 2018. Labour Bureaucracy and Labour Officialdom in Evo Morales's Bolivia. *Development and Change*, 0(0), pp.1–27. Available at: http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/dech.12453.

- McNelly, A., 2019, 'Neostructuralism and its Class Character in the Political Economy of Bolivia under Evo Morales', *New Political Economy*. Available at: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13563467.2019.1598962

Abstract

This thesis traces the experiences of urban working-class groups in the cities of El Alto and Santa Cruz during the government of Evo Morales through the dynamics of state formation, class formation and the production of space. Using material gather in over 100 semi-structured interviews and participant observation during seventeen-months of fieldwork in the cities of El Alto, La Paz and Santa Cruz, it seeks to analyse the experience of different working-class groups under what I frame as the passive revolution of Morales' government. Critical support for Morales in the city of El Alto continues, even as conditions of precarity, informality and poverty persist for many of the working-classes there. In Santa Cruz, the working-classes were never mobilised to the same extent and remained outside the influence or the interest of Morales' government. Faced with adverse conditions, working-class organisations here have followed more pragmatic forms of politics, building local alliances with different political and state actors to pursue more limited localised goals.

This thesis thus attempts to contribute, on the one hand, to theoretical perspectives on passive revolution as a process that is constantly contested through class struggle and being reinforced by different modes of statecraft. It also, on the other hand, illuminates the quotidian realities of the urban working-classes under the left-wing government of Evo Morales, arguing that the possibility of political action is simultaneously affected by processes of class formation and the subjective experience of class of different groups in different places as well as by processes of transformism.

Acknowledgements

So many people have helped me throughout my PhD, it is difficult to know where to start. Jeffery Webber was an exemplary supervisor and diligently read everything that I sent his way, giving constructive feedback on the good and the bad. I am a better scholar and smarter thanks to his input and advice. James Dunkerley was also on hand with wise words when needed, and his knowledge of Latin America never ceases to amaze me. Madeleine Davis, Nivi Manchanda and Rainbow Murray all gave me invaluable feedback in my progression reviews and helped keep the project on track. I am very grateful to the ESRC for funding the project, grant number ES/J500124/1.

I would not be the scholar I am today without the Latin American Marxism reading group organised by Jeff and Juan Grigera all those years ago. It was a much-needed introduction to radical Latin American scholarship; thanks to Jeff, Juan, Aiko Ikemura Amaral, Mara Duer, Sue Iamamoto, Pedro Mendes Loureiro, Roseline McDonnell and Luciana Zorzoli. The state theory reading group with Jeff, Luke Cooper, Kerem Nisancioglu and Paul Rekret also played a big part in my intellectual formation throughout the PhD process. Leandro Vergara-Camus deserves a mention as well for his interrogation of why I wanted to do a PhD when I was still a Master's student at SOAS. It was a baptism of fire, but a very necessary part of the process.

Thanks to my politics PhD colleagues at QMUL for brightening the day to day of university life, through tea breaks, trips to the local Wetherspoons and, on special occasions, the Lord Tredegar. Daniel Gover, Sofa Grandin, Sue, Matheus Lock, Jenna Marshall, Koen Slootmaeckers and Alen Toplišek were all so welcoming when I arrived, and Alex Blanchard, Farai Chipato, Andi Dickenson Simca Simpson and Gaia Taffoni have been excellent additions to my life. My cohort, especially Marisa Díaz and Tania Gomez, were very supportive throughout the process, as were Jeff's other PhD students Kristin Ciupa and Kyla Sankey. The wider school in general has been very friendly and I particularly enjoyed getting to know the department on the picket lines during the 2018 pensions dispute.

In Bolivia so many people helped me through the process. Carolina Turano made sure I was met off the plane and had a VIP reception. Carmen Solíz introduced me to Amy Kennemore, who was to become a great source of knowledge. Our conversations on Monday afternoon, usually in the company of the indefatigable

Lisbeth Vargas, sometimes joined too by Andrea Marston, Carly Rojas and Pedro Pachaguaya, were lessons in not only Bolivian politics but also research ethics and ethnography. Amaru Villanueva and Susanna Rance gave me a place to stay, and Amaru, as the head of the Centro de Investigaciones Sociales in La Paz, was very helpful in introducing me to local researchers. I think every *Bolivianista* scholar that comes through La Paz owes a debt of gratitude to Linda Farthing, and I am no exception. Linda helped shape my project through thoughtful, probing questions and made my time in La Paz more fun than it otherwise would have been. José Blanes and CEBEM gave me a desk in La Paz, something that I was very grateful for. La Paz-based scholars Carlos Arze, Ricardo Calla, Gonzalo Colque, Cecilia Salazar and Fernanda Wanderley all pointed me in the right direction when I arrived and each offered helpful suggestions about where the project could go.

The kindness I was shown by working-class Bolivians on my travels knew no bounds, with people making sure that I was included in orders for *saleñas*, soft drinks and soups. I was met with patience and interest at all of the local offices that I went to, often turning up unannounced to be greeted with *maté* and a smile. Severiche Brosque and Eliana Zorrilla gave me access to the Bolivian labour movement that most have not had the privilege of enjoying, and both of them went above and beyond in helping me. The cadre of leaders from the 2003 FEJUVE-El Alto all gave me a significant amount of their time, helping me map out the events so central to the social movements I study. Félix Muruchi was kind enough to introduce me to the current leadership of the FEJUVE-El Alto and take me on a whirlwind tour of the offices in the Ceja. Christian Estebes invited me to the School of Political Formation and his invitation formed the basis for chapter 6, an invaluable contribution. Away from research, my life in La Paz would not have been the same without my football team Colonia La Paz. Playing football twice a week gave me something to look forward to and a great group of friends. Gabriel Zeballos was a source of great entertainment on arrival. Aiko was my partner in crime in La Paz and I would have been lost without her. Her friendship has been an integral part to my PhD process and to my life more generally.

In Santa Cruz, I have to thank Kris Francescone and Vladimir Díaz for hooking me up with a place to live in Plan 3000 and to Ivan for welcoming us into his home. Our neighbours in Plan 3000 were forever kind, from playing cards with Ramiro to being driven to football with José, making our time in Santa Cruz a lot of fun. In the

Rotonda, Daniel Suárez and Enrique Gonzalo Alba were welcoming and very helpful, upstanding examples of good leadership under adverse conditions. Celestino Vacaflor and Sosimo Paniagua were good guides through the *cruceño* labour movement and directed me to the relevant people quickly, making sure I hit the ground running in my second research site.

Through my network of friends in La Paz I was able to enlist the help of a seeming army of transcribers, including Feliza Ali Ramos, Dafne Lopez, Sayuri Loza, and Valeria. Alejandra Rocabado did an amazing job with the maps, all of which she made. All of this was made possible by the best thing to come out of my PhD years, my meeting my wife Karina Guzman Miranda. Her family Ramiro, Eva and Lucia have been so friendly and welcoming. My family has also been a constant source of support, with my parents Angela and Nigel and siblings Juliet and Charlie always offering help and encouragement when needed. However, it is Kari who has had the greatest impact on this project, and it would be nothing without the love and support she has given me. It is to her that this project is dedicated.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

21F — Re-election Referendum of 21 February 2016

AC — *Asamblea Constituyente,* Constituent Assembly

ADEPA — Asociación Nacional de Productores de Algodón National Association of Cotton Producers

ADN — Acción Democrática Nacional, National Democratic Action

ALBA — Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América, Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America

ANAPO — Asociación de Productores de Oleaginosas y Trigo, Assocation of Oil and Wheat Producers

AP — Acuerdo Patriótico, Patriotic Accord

ASP — Asamblea por la Soberenía de los Pueblos, Assembly for the Sovereignty of the Peoples

BAB — Banco Agrario Boliviano, Bolivian Agricultural Bank

BANDES — Banco de Desarollo Social, Social Development Bank

BCI — Bloque Campesino Independente, Independent Peasant Bloc

BoA — Boliviana de Aviación, Bolivian Aviation

CAINCO — Cámara de Industria, Comercio, Servicios y Turismo, Chamber of Industry, Commerce, Services and Tourism

CAN — Comunidad Andina de Naciones, Andean Community of Nations

CDB — Chinese Development Bank

CEDURE — Centro de Estudios sobre Desarrollo Urbano y Regional, Center for Urban Development Studies

CEPB — Confederación de Empresarios Privados de Bolivia, the Confederation of Private Companies of Bolivia

CIDOB — Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia, Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia

CIS — Centro de Investigación Social, Central of Social Investigation

CNTCB — Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia, National Confederation of Peasant Workers of Bolivia

COB — Central Obrera Boliviana, Bolivian Workers' Central

COD-Santa Cruz — Central Obrera Departmental-Santa Cruz, Departmental Workers' Central of Santa Cruz

COMIBOL — Corporación Minera de Bolivia, Bolivian State-Mining Company

CONALCAM — Coordinadora Nacional pro el Cambio (National Coordinator pro Change

CONALJUVE — Confederación de las Juntas Vecinales, Confederation of Neighbourhood Councils

CONAMAQ — Confederación Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu, National Confederation of *Ayllus* and *Markas* of Qullasuyu

CONAMYPE — Confederación Nacional de la Micro y Pequeña de Bolivia, National Confederation of Micro and Small Producers

CONDEPA — Consciencia del Patria, Consciousness of the Fatherland

COR-El Alto — Central Obrera Regional de El Alto, Regional Workers' Central El Alto

CPR — Consejo del Plan Regulador, Council of Regulatory Planning

CPSC — Comité Pro-Santa Cruz, Pro-Santa Cruz Committee

CSCB — Confederación Sindical de los Colonizadores de Bolivia, Trade-Union Confederation of Colonizers

CSFTC — Coordinadora de las Seis Federaciones del Trópico de Cochabamba, Coordinator of the Six Coca-Grower's Federations of Tropical Cochabamba

CSUTCB — Confederación Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia, Unified Sindical Confederation of Peasant Workers of Bolivia

CUTUP — Central Unica de Transporte Urbano de Pasajeros La Paz, Unique Urban Transport Central of La Paz

DS — Decreto Supremo, Supreme Decree

EAP — Economically Active Population

EGTK — Ejército Guerrillero Tupaj Katari, Tupaj Katari Guerrilla-Army

ENDE — Empresa Nacional de Energía, National Energy-Company

ENFE — Empresa Nacional de Ferrocarriles de Bolivia, National Railway Company

ENTEL — Empresa Nacional de Telecomunicaciones de Bolivia, National Telephone Company

EPSAS — La Empresa Pública Social de Agua y Saneamiento, The Public Social Water and Sanitation Company

FCC — Fondo de Capitalización Colectiva, Collective Capitalisation Fund

FDI — foreign direct investment

FEDECOR — Federación Departamental de Regantes, c of Cochabamba

FEDECTRAN — Federación Departmental de Cooperativas de Transporte Santa Cruz, Departmental Federation of Transport Cooperatives of Santa Cruz

FEJUVE — Federación de las Juntas Vecinales, Federation of Neighbourhood Councils

FENCOMIN — Federación Nacional de Cooperativas Mineras, National Federation of Cooperative Miners

FMUC — Federación de Maestros Urbanos de Cochabamba, Urban Teachers' Federation of Cochabamba

FONDIOC — Fondo de Desarrollo Indígena Originario Campesino, Indigenous Originary Peasant Development Fund

FPN — Frente Popular Nacionalista, Nationalist-Popular Front

FSB — Falange Socialista Boliviana, Bolivian Socialist Falange

FSTMB — Federación Sindical de los Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia, Trade-Union Federation of Bolivian Mine Workers

GDP — Gross Domestic Product

GNI — Gross National Income

HDI — Human Development Index

IBRD — International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

IDEA — Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

IDH — Impuesto Directo de Hidrocarburos, Direct Hydrocarbons Tax

IIRSA — Iniciativa para la Integración de la Infraestructura Regional Suramericana, Initiative for the Integration of South America

IMF — International Monetary Fund

INRA — Instituto Nacional de Reforma Agraria, National Agrarian Reform Institute

IOC — Indígena Originaria Campesina, Indigenous Originary Peasant

ISI — Import-Substitution Industrialisation

ITC — International Tin Council

IU — Izquierda Unida, Left Unity

LAB — Lloyd Aéreo Boliviano, Bolivian Airline Lloyd

MIR — Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionario, Left Revolutionary Movement

MNR — Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario, Revolutionary Nationalist Movement

MNRH — Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario Histórico, Historic National Revolutionary Movement

MNRI — Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario de Izquierda Revolutionary National Movement of the Left

NGO — Non-Governmental Organisations

NPE — Nueva Política Económica, New Economic Policy

NSM — New Social Movement

OTB — Organización Territorial de Base, Base Territorial Organisation

PAO — Plan de Acción Operativa, Annual Action Plan

PCB — Partido Comunista de Bolivia, Bolivian Comunist Party

PDM — Plan de Desarrollo Municipal, Municipal Development Plan

POA — Programa de Operaciones Anuales, Annual Operating Programme

POR — Partido Obrero Boliviano, Bolivian Workers' Party

POS — Political Opportunity Structure

PSM — Plan Sectoral de Minería, Mining Sectoral Plan

PT — Partido dos Trabalhadores, Workers' Party

PU — Pacto de Unidad, Unity Pact

REPAC — Representación Presidencial para la Asamblea Constituyente, Presidential Representation for the Constituent Assembly

RM — Resource Mobilisation

SEMPLA — Secretaría Municipal de Planifiación, Municipal Planning Secretary

SNPP — Secretario Nacional de Participación Popular, National Secretariat of Popular Participation

SPF — School of Political Formation

TIPNIS — Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro Sécure, Isiboro Sécure National Park and Indigenous Territory

UCS — Unión Civica Solidaridad, Solidarity Civic Union

UDP — Unidad Democrática Popular, Democratic Popular Unity

UJC — Unión Juvenil Cruceñistas, Cruceño Youth Union

UMSA — Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, University of San Andrés (Public University of La Paz)

UPEA — Universidad Pública Autónoma de El Alto, Autonomous Public University of El Alto

US — United States

USAID — US Agency for Development

WTO — World Trade Organisation

VMCMSSC — Viceministerio de Coordinación con Movimientos Sociales y la Sociedad Civil, Viceministry for the Coordination with Social Movements and Civil Society

YPFB — Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales de Bolivia, Bolivian State Petroleum Company

Introducing the Pink Tide

> At the beginning of the socialist period of Evo Morales the government attended to many things, but as the years have passed, it has become more of the same.[1]

> The government has to start showing what has changed because we are not living the *proceso de cambio* (process of change).[2]

> In reality, nothing has changed, maybe the only good thing has been economic stability.[3]

The election of Movimiento al Socialismo (Movement Towards Socialism, MAS) candidate, Evo Morales, as president in 2005 was the culmination of years of social movement struggle, and represented for many indigenous working-class and peasant Bolivians, a moment of hope, a sign that after 500 years of colonial and republican domination and 20 years of some of the harshest neoliberal reforms experienced in Latin America, things were changing. Bolivia has long been a country of missed chances, of lost riches, of natural resource wealth that slips agonisingly through the fingers and out of reach. Anthropologist June Nash (1993, 1), in the introduction to her seminal piece of scholarship on Bolivia *We Eat the Mines, The Mines Eat Us*, laments the paradox of stupendous wealth—first silver, then tin (now hydrocarbons)—that has led to nothing but abject poverty for those who live in this landlocked South American country. Many feel that the government of Morales was an opportunity for change that has been 'squandered' (Farthing 2018), as the quotes above from actors across the social spectrum and country show.

Social commentators across the continent argue that Latin America today has entered a new phase, as the progressive cycle Morales and his government have been a part of wanes (Gago and Sztulwark 2016, Gaudichaud 2015, Katz 2017, Modonesi 2015, Modonesi and Iglesias 2016, Modonesi and Svampa 2016, Salazar

[1] Alex Marcelo Vasquez de la Monte, leader, People with Disability March, interview, La Paz, 19/05/2016.
[2] Jaime Ávila Montaño, Executive Secretary, Federation of Factory Workers of Santa Cruz, interview, Santa Cruz, 06/03/2017. The *proceso de cambio* is what the government has labelled its transformative project and is, in essence, the object of study in this thesis.
[3] Antonio Ramos, railway worker in a street protest, interview, La Paz, 23/06/2016.

2015, 2016, Svampa 2017a, 2017b).[4] The current socio-political conjuncture is one where the progressive forces that have been predominant in many countries over the past decade are in a state of reflux (Gaudichaud 2017). We are living a moment of conservative restoration in which the openings for social transformations have closed (Katz 2017). The Pink Tide, as the progressive period in Latin America is known, has come to a close.

This thesis is an attempt to understand working-class experiences of the government of Evo Morales in two Bolivian cities through the theoretical frame of a passive revolution. I argue that the particular configuration of the working-classes, their historical experiences of class struggle, the production of urban space and uneven state formation, has impacted the relationship of different groups with the state and their experiences of Morales' government during this period. On the one hand, in the city of El Alto, strong social movements that brought down two national governments were co-opted by Morales' governments and integrated into the state through processes of 'transformism', pacifying their radical potential despite no significant material change to the structure of city's working-classes. Transformism has, however, proved unable to completely appease *alteño* (people from the city of El Alto) working-classes, who demonstrate awareness of the government's limitations and the processes of co-optation themselves, indicating that passive revolution is never fully complete. On the other hand, in the city of Santa Cruz, the spatial production of the city, its emergence as an economic hub and its particular class structure have produced adverse conditions for working-class organisations. In the absence of rank-and-file participation in social organisations, local leaders have turned to building pragmatic alliances with local elites and the state in order to achieve modest local material gains. Whereas a once highly-mobilised, independent working class was absorbed and disarticulated by the state in El Alto, in Santa Cruz, pragmatic, vertical, and clientelistic working class relations with the state showed considerable continuity under Morales compared to earlier historical periods, precisely because the working class of Santa Cruz had never been as well organised nor capable of independent mobilisation from below. Before outlining my exact theoretical approach in detail in

[4] Some have debated the validity of this claim (e.g., García Linera 2013, 2017, Sader 2015). However, Modonesi (2012, 2015) in particular presents a convincing argument for the closing of the progressive epoch explored further below.

chapter one, I am going to situate the government of Morales in the broader context of the Pink Tide and explain my method of multi-sited political ethnography.

Periodising the Pink Tide

The phrase the 'Pink Tide' was coined in the wake of Tabaré Vasquez's 2004 electoral victory in Uruguay (Lievesley and Ludlam 2009, 1).[5] For many mainstream political scientists and commentators, the Pink Tide is defined by electoral cycles across Latin America, and started with the election of Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez in 1999.[6] However, this perspective downplays the economic dynamics of primary-export orientated Latin American economies and the importance of high commodity prices during the first half of this period (2002–2013), which paradoxically deepened the insertion of Latin American countries governed by political parties of all denominations into the global market as primary commodity producers, and enabled a degree of political autonomy from other global powers—most notably the United States (US) and the bastions of neoliberalism, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank. It also downplays the significant extra-parliamentary struggles from below that have shaped left-wing governmental regimes and state-society relations. Argentine Marxist Claudio Katz (2015b, 74), argues that the relationship between the economic and political dimensions of the Pink Tide is complex, with changes to both 'neither occurring at the same rhythm nor in the same direction'. Although alterations of one impinge and shape the other (due to the dialectical unity of the political and the economic), the political upheaval and drastic shifts witnessed during this period have not been accompanied by transformations of the economic sphere, which have remained limited (Katz 2015b, 74).

Although the subject of some debate, I argue there are five phases of the progressive cycle, the last three of which contain the Pink Tide. The periodisation of the Pink Tide (and its precursors) followed throughout this thesis, extends beyond electoral cycles and explores its interrelated political economic dynamics. Each phase is not distinct from the next, nor do they follow exactly one after another, with overlaps

[5] 'Pink Tide' is a play on the algae bloom known as the 'red tide' and not-quite-communist (red) character of these governments (the varying extent to which leftist governments are '21st Century Socialists').
[6] See Cameron and Hershberg 2010, Castañeda 2006, de la Torre and Arnson 2013, Flores-Macias 2012, Levitsky and Roberts 2011, Queirolo 2013, Vargas Llosa 2009.

between phases at different moments, in part due to the political and economic dimensions being, as Katz argues, out of sync; in part due to the multifaceted and complex nature of the Pink Tide. The chapters of the thesis roughly follow the phases of the progressive cycle until the fifth phase, where multi-sited ethnography is used to examine the particular dynamics of the last two phases in more detail.

The first phase of the progressive cycle is that of neoliberalism, which swept across Latin America via the debt crisis and subsequent structural adjustment programmes during the 1980s. This first precursory phase entered into a second phase as a series of crises rocked the continent. First, the Mexican Peso Crisis of 1994-1995 shook the region. Then recession hit Brazil following the South-East Asian and Russian economic crises in 1997, before the crisis reached its zenith with the Argentinian collapse in 2001 (Spronk and Webber 2014, 7). Combined with the underlying medium-term dynamics of neoliberalism—low economic growth, rapidly increasing inequality and financial instability—these crises had stark social and political effects on Latin American societies.

Neoliberal hegemony crumbled during this period opening spaces of opportunity for the Left. Although not present in all Latin American contexts—in Colombia, Mexico and Peru neoliberalism was deepened during this period—resistance to neoliberalism during the 1990s and early-2000s opened the initial phase of the Pink Tide itself and spawned horizons of political action that reconfigured 'the links between the social and the political, between institutional and extra-institutional struggle' (Modonesi and Rebón 2011, 9). Landless peasant movements in Brazil, as well as the indigenous movements of Bolivia and Ecuador, challenged the nexus of economic growth and multicultural regimes of inclusion. The working-class radicalism of the *piquetero* (unemployed workers) movement in Argentina and urban social movements in Bolivia confronted the dominance of neoliberalism as Latin America increasingly entered into economic crisis. This was reflected in a rejection of neoliberal political parties at the polls with the elections of: Hugo Chávez (1999–2013) and Nicolás Maduro (2013-present) in Venezuela; Nestor Kirchner (2003–2007) and Christina Kirchner (2007–2015) in Argentina; Lula da Silva (2003–2011) and Dilma Rousseff (2011–2016) in Brazil; Tabaré Vázquez (2005–2010, 2015–present) and José Mujica (2010–2015) in Uruguay; Evo Morales (2006–present) in Bolivia; Manuel Zelaya (2006–2009) in Honduras; Rafeal Rafael Correa (2007–2017) in Ecuador;

Daniel Ortega (2007–present) in Nicaragua; and Fernando Lugo (2008–2012) in Paraguay.

However, these electoral victories are merely the institutional expression of the dynamics of the Pink Tide, which encompassed a broader set of transformations and was characterised by Massimo Modonesi and Julián Rebón (2011) as 'a decade in movement'. Radical opportunities in Latin America did not automatically appear with the election of moderate left-wing leaders, but opened in earnest following the 2002 US-backed attempted *coup d'état* and the subsequent oil lockout by the petroleum elite and technocrats in 2003 in Venezuela (see Ellner 2010); the apogee of working-class indigenous struggles in Bolivia, the Gas War of October 2003; and the culmination of the *piquetero* movement in Argentina during the same period (Svampa and Pereyra 2003). In other words, electoral politics offers an inadequate window into the dynamics of the Pink Tide, which is underpinned by the economic dimensions of crisis and bonanza, as well as extra-parliamentary class struggle and social movements.

The phase of social movement radicalism and self-organisation from below gave birth to the fourth phase in the cycle (and the second stage of the Pink Tide): the Left in state power. During this fourth phase left-wing governments were able to use high commodity prices (driven by dynamism in the enormous Chinese economy) and a larger captured share of extractive rents to enact moderate social redistribution programmes. The radical movements from below were curtailed and co-opted into the state through assuming government or administrative posts, socialist rhetoric and an increased share of state resources during what Federico Rossi (2018) has labelled 'the second incorporation of popular sectors in Latin America'. This marked a shift away from the Washington Consensus espoused by the triumvirate of the World Bank, the IMF and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to what Argentinian sociologist Maristella Svampa (2013) calls the 'commodity consensus'. This 'neo-extractivism' was a qualitatively different form of extractivism, argues Uruguayan ecologist Eduardo Gudynas (2010, 3), 'bearing a progressive stamp'. Under the Pink Tide the state has been more directly and indirectly involved in natural resource extraction and processes of change have become intertwined with the exploitation and future extraction of this enormous ecological wealth. Gudynas has called this new state form the 'compensatory state', as Pink Tide governments have used the economic windfall gained through increased extractivism to implement limited wealth redistribution

through social programmes. The important thing to note regarding the compensatory state is that underlying class structure is left unchanged and unchallenged (Escobar de Pabón 2014, Webber 2016b). The progressive governments of the Pink Tide are not the same as their neoliberal predecessors (Gudynas 2010, 3), but the conservative limits to the possible horizons of the Pink Tide governments (namely the confines of the capitalist state) ultimately reveal their class component in the last instance (Modonesi 2012, 160).

Leftist governments entered into alliance with the economically dominant bourgeois classes, with the maintenance of the property relations forged under neoliberalism and the lack of any meaningful agrarian reform enabling 'a new wave of capitalist globalisation with greater credibility than their orthodox neoliberal predecessors' (Robinson 2008, 292, Vergara-Camus and Kay 2017a, 2017b). In Chile, Michelle Bachelet used her identity as a divorced mother of three, a socialist leader and a torture victim under the Augusto Pinchot dictatorship to give neoliberalism a progressive face, refiguring the balance of content and coercion without changing the institutional nexus developed under Pinochet (Gaudichaud 2014, 136–40). Castorina (2014, 96) highlights a similar feature of Peronism in Argentina under the Kirchners, where economic stability was achieved 'without fundamentally altering the structure of social inequalities and power'. In Brazil, the Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' Party, PT) built alliances with transnational capital and the national bourgeoisie (Boito and Berringer 2014, Boito and Saad-Filho 2016, Rada Vélez 2015), not only reproducing neoliberal political economy but extending processes of what Marxist geographer David Harvey (2003) has called 'accumulation by dispossession'.[7] This has been most extreme in the Amazon rainforest, where huge tracts of land have been opened to soya and biofuel production (Rada Vélez 2015, Vergara-Camus 2013, 2014). The alliance with the Brazilian bourgeoisie was also one of the factors in the political crisis that emerged in the wake of the Car Wash (Lava Jato) investigations into corruption and misappropriation of funds from the state-owned oil company Petrobras (Webber 2016a). In Bolivia, an indigenous president heading the government has enabled expansion of hydrocarbons exploration and exploitation into

[7] Harvey (2003) developed this schema from Marx's idea of primitive accumulation, the violent appropriation of resources and land at the beginning of capitalism that was transformed into the first capital. Harvey argues that, due to capitalism's expansionary nature, this is an ongoing process.

national parks, something that Bolivian political sociologist Huáscar Salazar (2015, Ch.3, 2016) contends previous (openly) neoliberal regimes could never have achieved.

However, none of the outcomes are predetermined nor are they the same across the region (although as the discussion above demonstrates, there are a number of common trends). The class compromise underpinning Pink Tide governments was dependent on high resource prices and sufficient rent to be shared between capital and left-wing governments. When the resource bonanza came to a close in 2013, this uneasy equilibrium was shattered and the Pink Tide governments entered into crisis. This is the impasse which we find ourselves faced with today, the third phase of the Pink Tide and fifth of the progressive cycle. The end of cycle captures a number of inter-related phenomena which commentators have analysed in different ways: the crash in commodity prices upon which leftist governments became dependent (Svampa 2013); the demobilisation of social movements which led the resurrection against neoliberalism in the region (Silva and Rossi 2018, Salazar Lohman 2015, 2016); the growing political crises in a number of countries (Argentina, Brazil, Nicaragua and Venezuela in particular);[8] and the resurgence of the political Right with the coup d'états in Brazil (2016), Honduras (2012) and Paraguay (2009) (Katz 2015a, 23).[9] The end of this progressive cycle has impacts on the immediate political strategies of the Latin American Left and the medium term trajectory of the region as a whole (Modonesi 2015, 23). Understanding the dynamics of these processes in the Bolivian case in order to sketch out possible lessons from this cycle is the principal goal of this thesis.

Methodology: Multi-sited Political Ethnography

This thesis uses a political ethnographic approach, something that informs my data collection, writing style and methodology. I conducted my fieldwork over a 17-month period between January 2016 and May 2017, going to marches, protests, national and local meetings, open air assemblies [*cabildos*] as well as conducting over 100

[8] See Chavez *et al.* 2017 for an overview of the Venezuelan crisis.
[9] For commentary on Brazil, see Fernandes 2016, Purdy 2017, Webber 2016a. For an analysis on Honduras, see Gordon and Webber 2013. For an overview of the dynamics in the region, see 2017 Jacobin magazine, *By Taking Power.*

interviews with social movement actors, state officials and bureaucrats, academics and local residents. I largely focused on four social organisations that have been at the heart of the *proceso de cambio* in Bolivia in the past decade: labour unions, neighbourhood organisations, market guilds [*gremios*] and transport unions [*transportistas*]. These organisations are not only the most prevalent articulations of popular classes in urban Bolivia, but they also are central sites of statecraft.

Figure 0.1: Fieldwork Sites

Source: Alejandra Rocabado

After initially making contacts through my supervisors and academic events in the UK, I was able to extend the scope of my interviews and access to social organisations through snowballing, whereby my interviewees suggested people to talk

to in the future. My friendship with both foreign and local researchers, fostered through events at the local universities and intellectual hubs, and complemented by regular political discussions over coffee and coca, provided an invaluable source of support and knowledge, honing my understanding of my field sites. This was particularly important in La Paz, both because of its intellectual culture and community, and because it was the place I 'landed' in the field.

I discussed how I positioned myself as a researcher at length with colleagues and something I learnt through experience doing my fieldwork. Sharing experiences with my interviewees—such as marches, blockades, rallies and the sessions of a school of political formation—formed a sense of camaraderie and solidarity, especially with those from the labour movement who viewed my presence at six-days of general strike protests as a sign I could be trusted. Coca leaves provided an ice-breaker with the rank-and-file of social organisations, who would warmly receive the invitation to *pijcha* (chew coca). Reciprocity is a vital part of Bolivian life, particularly in the Andes. Sharing coca and demonstrating that I knew how to *pijcha* brought me closer to many Bolivians and reduced my distance from them as a foreign, white researcher. Most people were keen to share their experiences with someone who listened intently (and who sat cross-legged in the street at a barricade with them), but I only entered space once I had been invited and welcomed by gatekeepers. It was a privilege, not a right, and not something I ever took (or will take) for granted.

Nearly all of my interviews were recorded and then transcribed in La Paz. All of my interviews were in Spanish and inflected with the local idioms and Aymara in the case of El Alto. My familiarity with everyday life in La Paz/El Alto gained through participant observation and activities outside of research, including playing football with a local team in La Paz for a year, helped me overcome these issues, but meant that I selected Bolivians to transcribe the interviews. Only the *transportistas* were not happy about being recorded and asked to be anonymous due to their political position and relationship to the state discussed in chapter 6. Most of the people I approached to interview were happy to talk to me, and it seemed like it was an expected part of being a local social organization leader. Indeed, many of the FEJUVE-El Alto leaders from 2003 were evidently old hands and have been interviewed by many *Bolivianista* researchers. This lead to a possible selection bias, although researchers always have to pass through gatekeepers, and I tried to overcome this issue with the length of my

field research trip to Bolivia (17 months) and the large number people I interviewed (over 100).

There are several methodological concerns when using ethnography. Firstly, ethnography is not solely a data collection 'tool'. Such reductionism is to empty ethnography of its lived experience, evacuate it of its power and, as Wanda Vrasti (2008) quite rightly stresses, to ignore the hermeneutic turn within anthropology in the 1970s following Clifford Geertz's groundbreaking work. Data collected through participant observation 'is a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which [the researcher] must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render' (Geertz 1973, 10). Ethnography thus entails multiple moments of interpretation or hermeneutics and shapes not only what data one collects but it is understood, placing significance on the researcher as well as their interlocutors. After all, as Geertz (1973, 22) stresses, 'anthropologists don't study villages (tribes, towns, neighbourhoods…); they study *in* villages'.

The goal of ethnography is to render the microscopic facet of broader dynamics accessible through framing them in their banalities; that is not to say the object of study is merely the anodyne features of everyday life. Sites are *not* representative but they do contain parts of broader processes that can be pieced together to make broader theoretical claims (Baiocchi and Conner 2008, 150). It is through careful observation and analysis of intimate spaces that wider observations can be made, accounting for both macro-phenomena, such as the Pink Tide, and the incongruence of city life at the heart of the dynamics shaping these macro-phenomena. 'Ethnography is uniquely equipped', Javier Auyero and Lauren Joseph (2007, 2) argue, 'to look microscopically at the foundations of political institutions and their attendant sets of practices, just as it is ideally suited to explain why political actors behave the way they do and to identify the causes, processes, and outcomes that are part and parcel of political life'. It is in intimate spaces that politics really comes to life.[10]

Political ethnographers Gianpaolo Baiocchi and Brian Conner (2008, 140) argue there are three different sides to political ethnography. Firstly, there is the study of formal and informal political actors and institutions, including the state, social movements and civil society organisations. Secondly, there are 'encounters with formal politics' at the boundaries of political institutions. Finally, there is the 'lived

[10] Possibly the best example of this is Andrew Canessa's *Intimate Indigeneities* (2012a).

experience of politics', sites of power and politics normally considered nonpolitical. Political ethnography in practice contains all three of these sides, but this heuristic distinction is useful when considering what the object of study is within political ethnography and potential limitations to such an approach. It captures how political ethnographers collect and record central considerations often ignored by mainstream political science and sociology: how and why people band together and make demands; clandestine relationships and actions that enable political action; and the ways in which dominant power is reproduced through everyday life (Auyero and Joseph 2006). This thesis sits at the intersection of all three dimensions of political ethnography. In doing so it reveals the processes of state formation and class formation *from below*, allowing an analysis that retains the living essence that I argue is central to my understanding of my key concepts: 'class', 'space' and 'the state'.

Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 1 sketches out the mainstream theoretical approaches to social movements and the informal city, as well as the political ethnography literature on the Latin American city. It then outlines the 'passive revolution' theoretical frame and the three theoretical pivots—class, space and state—used to analyse the Pink Tide in Bolivia. Chapter 2 explores the political economy of Bolivia following the post-1952 revolution in Bolivia and traces the processes state formation and the reorganisation of space through the second half of the twentieth century. During this period the decline of tin mining and the rise of agribusiness based in the department of Santa Cruz shifted the axis of capital accumulation from La Paz–Oruro–Potosí to La Paz–Cochabamba–Santa Cruz. This was also a period of urbanisation, and covers the foundation of El Alto in the 1950s through to its population explosion following the El Niño/La Niña weather phenomenon in 1982–1983. This natural event also caused the river Piraí to burst its banks, displacing many poor urban residents of Santa Cruz to the area commonly known as Plan 3000.

Chapter 3 covers neoliberalism in Bolivia, exploring the changes to the state, class formations and urban spaces between 1985 and the late-1990s. Chapter 4 then explores how the crisis of neoliberalism in the late-1990s galvanised five years of social movements starting in the year 2000. It focuses particularly on the growing radicalism in El Alto which culminated in the first Gas War of October 2003, the break-

up of clientelist networks that emerged in the city during the 1990s and the specific role of the Federación de las Juntas Vecinales El Alto (El Alto Federation of Neighbourhood Councils, FEJUVE-El Alto) in social struggle. It then maps the relationship between these social movements and the first government of Evo Morales (2006–2009).

Chapters 5 addresses state formation and political economy under Evo Morales. It examines how the MAS government was able to re-legitimise the state beginning with the Constituent Assembly. It also sketches out the material basis for state formation: the political economy of the MAS government and the cementation of Bolivia's place in the region as a producer of hydrocarbons. Chapter 5 concludes by outlining the ways in which public works, indigeneity and the president himself have been used to legitimise and consolidate the Bolivian state.

The last two chapters of the thesis are case studies drawing heavily on ethnographic data and interviews performed during my fieldwork. Chapters 6 and 7 look at the micro processes of state formation and class formation occurring in urban working-class organisations. Chapter 6 centres on the School of Political Formation in El Alto and explores working-class experiences of transformism, the second moment of passive revolution. Chapter 7 explores the local politics of moving a popular marketplace in the city of Santa Cruz, the economic hub of the country and home to a disorganised, fragmented and informalised working-class population.

Finally, a conclusion ties together the overarching theoretical and empirical contributions of the thesis. Combining the heuristic devices borrowed from anthropological state theory—the state effect, state affect and the sublime-profane dialectic—with a Thompsonian class perspective and adding them to a spatially sophisticated reading of passive revolution, helps overcome the tendency towards state-centricity in existing analyses of the Pink Tide using passive revolution and view these processes 'from below' through the everyday. Empirically, the thesis traces, on the one hand, the rise and fall of social movement radicalism and how transformism and the construction of a 'government of social movements' has played out in the city of El Alto; on the other hand, it explores how the Morales government has been experienced by a marginal working-class neighbourhood in the city of Santa Cruz, and outlines the forms of pragmatic politics that working-class social organisations have engaged in outside processes of transformism.

Chapter 1

Theorising the Pink Tide: Social Movements, the City and Class, Space and the State in Passive Revolution

This chapter provides a survey of two possible approaches to particular aspects of the Pink Tide—social movement theory and political ethnography—sketching out their contributions and shortcomings, as well as the theoretical approach used in this thesis. I begin with a brief theoretical portrait of the precursory phase of the progressive cycle, neoliberalism. Secondly, I outline how New Social Movement theory from Europe and the US resource mobilisation school have proved influential in the study of Latin American social movements. However, I argue that because both downplay political economy and the importance of class, they ultimately remain unable to explain the particular dynamics of the Pink Tide. Thirdly, before outlining the contributions of critical political ethnography literature focusing on Latin American cities, I explain some of the mainstream perspectives on the informal city and their drawbacks. I then examine the political ethnography and the popular economy literatures, before ultimately concluding that they suffer from the same shortcomings as mainstream social movement theory.

After this literature review, I delve into my Gramscian approach to the Pink Tide. Fourthly, I explain the concept of ‘passive revolution’, its two moments—'catharsis’ and ‘transformism’—and its spatial character. Fifthly, having already explained how the production of space is an integral part of passive revolution, I then outline my two other theoretical lenses developed to help understand processes of passive revolution ‘from below’. I borrow three heuristic devices from anthropological studies of the state—the state effect, the state affect and the profane-sublime dialectic—to understand the continual and conflictual nature of state formation through passive revolution. I also mobilise a processual and relational definition of ‘class’ from E.P. Thompson to help analyse quotidian life in cities under Evo Morales. Lastly, I outline my relational understanding of indigeneity and the ethnic composition of Bolivian society.

Defining Neoliberalism

The first pre-stage of the Pink Tide, neoliberalism, emerged during the 1970s as the 'Keynesian compromise' in post-war western countries started to break down (Marois 2012, 5, McNally 2011, 25, Duménil and Lévy 2005, 9). At the first instance, neoliberalism is a particularly seductive 'economic, political and moral doctrine that posits the individual as the fundamental basis of society' (Gill 2000, 4), appealing to human dignity and individual freedom (Harvey 2005, 5). Some present it as a theory of political economic practices (expounded by Milton Friedman 1962, and Friedrich Hayek 2001[1944]) that reorganise the roles of the state and the market in society. From this perspective, human well-being is best achieved by ensuring individuals have the freedom to pursue entrepreneurial activities through the market, which is understood as the synthesis of all the knowledge and potential of individuals operating in society. The role of the state is to provide the institutional framework for the functioning of the market, guaranteeing strong private property rights, free markets and free trade, as well as the quality and integrity of money (Harvey 2005, 2). If the market has not yet penetrated some areas of society, the state must create markets (through force if necessary). This expansion of markets can be achieved extensively, by opening up new economies and regions to global markets and capital accumulation, and intensively, through the commodification of social services, reproductive activities and leisure, and financialisation of commodities more generally through financial markets and the creation of financial instruments, such as derivatives and futures (Harvey 2003). Moreover, in this framework, market distortions (e.g., minimum wage, labour laws, environmental standards) must be removed so that the signals from the market are understandable to the individuals following them.

However, many argue that rather than being understood as a utopian project, neoliberalism must be construed as a political project of class restoration in the face of the systemic crisis of capitalism that appeared in the 1970s (e.g., Castorina 2014, 73–74, Duménil and Lévy 2005, 9, Harvey 2005, 28, Marois 2005, Saad-Filho and Johnston 2005, 1, Spronk and Webber 2014, 6). Neoliberalism is 'a historical, class-based ideology that proposes all social, political, and ecological problems can be resolved through more direct free-market exposure', argues Thomas Marois (2005, 103), 'which has become an increasingly structural aspect of capitalism'. Removing market distortions is synonymous with labour flexibilisation, outsourcing and cutbacks,

the replacement of life-long jobs with low quality, short-term contracts and the annihilation of labour unions and working-class power globally, placing the burden of neoliberal reforms onto working-class people. Labour was (and still is) disciplined 'through contractionary fiscal and monetary policies and wide-ranging initiatives to curtail social rights, under the guise of anti-inflation and productivity-enhancing measures' (Saad-Filho and Johnston 2005, 4), on top of more explicit state-backed terror (the military, police, defence and legal structures).

Anthropologist Elizabeth Povinelli (2011, 22) argues that this had impacts that spread far beyond simply production:

> within a neoliberal framework any social investment that does not have a clear end in market value—a projectable moment when state input values (money, services, care) can be replaced by market output value (workers compensated and supported by nothing except the market)—fails economically and morally… whether or not the investment is life enhancing.

State-market relations were reformulated as a zero-sum game, meaning that the expansion of markets was equated with cutting back state provision of services, used by ordinary people in their everyday lives, and their privatisation. The extension of 'market relations' is often achieved at the expense of access to basic amenities, including food, water, education, work, land, housing, medical care, transportation and public services (Hoggart 2005, Levidow 2005, MacGregor 2005). The result has been increased wealth for a small proportion of the global elite and the increasingly degradation of the majority of people.

Neoliberalism in Latin America

There is an important spatial aspect of this class project, as neoliberalism makes capitalism 'ever more tightly organised *through* dispersal, geographical mobility, and flexible responses in labour markets, labour processes, and consumer markets, all accompanied by hefty doses of institutional, product and technological innovation' (Harvey 1989, 159). Neoliberalism and the recent acceleration of globalisation are inseparable, as the marketisation of the world opens up new spaces of capital accumulation (Robinson 2008). The profitability of capital was restored at the expense of the working-classes, indigenous people and the economies in the Global South. David Harvey (2003, 115–16) calls this a spatio-temporal fix: the production of space

through 'the organization of wholly new divisions of labour, the opening up of new and cheaper resource complexes, of new regions as dynamic spaces of capital accumulation, and the penetration of pre-existing social formations by capitalist social relations and institutional arrangements that allowed for the adsorption of capital and labour surpluses'. Linda Farthing and Benjamin Kohl (2006) explore how neoliberalism became a hegemonic paradigm globally by imbuing its discourse with a natural quality that allows its propagation across the globe through structural adjustment programs.[11] Multilateral organisations (largely the IMF, WTO and World Bank) took advantage of the sovereign debt crisis in the so-called 'Third-World' in order to force governments to adhere to

> fiscal austerity with minimal to zero-deficits, cut-backs in spending for social services and subsidies for food and other basic necessities, reform of the tax-system, liberalisation of financial markets, unification of exchange-rates, liberalisation of trade, elimination of barriers to foreign direct investment (FDI), deregulation of industry, and strengthening of guarantees of private-property rights in return for debt relief (Webber 2011b, 31).

The spatial dimension of neoliberalism demonstrates the integral part played by imperialist practices in this political project, led by both the United States and to a lesser degree other core imperial powers (Harvey 2003 62–74, Saad-Filho and Johnston 2005, 2). Violence was an intrinsic feature of the expansion of neoliberalism to Latin America, with authoritarian regimes in the Southern Cone and counter-insurgent terror in Central America an essential part of the move from Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI) policies to export-led marketed economies (Munck 2013, 136). The organisational capacity to resist the imposition of policies from above was destroyed (Grandin and Joseph 2010). Left-wing political parties, labour unions and social organisations in civil society were decimated through the disappearance and murder of activists, leading to a qualitatively different composition of the 'new Left' in Latin America (Webber and Carr 2013, 2). The social effects across Latin America were severe, with the consolidation of a small elite who controlled the exploitation of the region's natural resources and who were integrated into transnational circuits of capital (Robinson 2008). Portes and Hoffman (2003, 23) find that one of the major

[11] A good example of this naturalisation is Williamson's (1993) article on the suggested policy framework of the Washington Consensus.

trends under neoliberalism has been an acceleration of increasing income (and wealth) concentration despite economic growth. Moreover, unlike in the industrialised Global North, labour market informality did not decrease with economic growth. On the contrary, it increased massively under neoliberalism (Portes and Hoffman 2003, 29–30).[12] This was a gendered process, both because neoliberalism drew large numbers of women into informal employment and because formal employment (which also absorbed large numbers of female workers) became increasingly 'feminised' and stripped of the benefits, security and stability formal male workers once enjoyed (Hite and Viterna 2005, Standing 1989, 1999). The financialisation of Latin American economies and the opening up of their economies cemented the region's place as a commodity producer in the global market (although important pockets of industry remained),[13] with devastating social and ecological effects. It created the social and material conditions for the emergence of social movements struggle and the broader Pink Tide cycle.

Studying Social Change: Social Movement Theory

The study of social conflict and social change was transformed during the 1960s as cycles of protest in Western Europe and North America seemingly centred on new axes of discontent with a heterogeneous composition emerged. Movements rooted in civil rights, feminism and sexual liberation, ecology and peace were seen to characterise a 'post-industrial' society, shifting the lines of struggle away from class considerations to those of cultural and identity (Webber 2011b, 4, Barker et al. 2014, 5). These new social movements heavily influenced the two main strands of mainstream social movement literature—the 'identity-oriented' paradigm of European New Social Movement (NSM) scholarship and the 'resource-mobilisation' (RM) paradigm that emerged out of US academia (Cohen 1985, 663). Both paradigms shared a number of assumptions. Firstly, social movements are composed of rational individuals. Secondly, highly developed communicative

[12] Levels of informality are increasing in the Global North too, demonstrating that the Keynesian compromise was more an anomaly of capitalism rather than the generalizable norm (Breman and Van der Linden 2014).

[13] See Grigera (2013). Industry remains important across the region, especially in the larger economies of Argentina and Brazil, albeit in adapted forms as part of a 'new dependent reproductive cycle' (Katz 2015a, 12).

networks give movements a well-organised character. Thirdly, collective action is divided into two separate levels: on the one hand large-scale mobilisations and on the other hand the micro-forms of organisation forms and communication that make such mobilisations possible (Webber 2011b, 3–4).

In Europe, the NSM-perspective emerged in response to a perceived inability of pre-existing theories, particularly Marxism, to explain these new movements concerned with civil society (as oppose to the economy or the state) and transforming pre-existing facets of society through radical democratisation (rather than replacement) of existing institutions (Cohen 1985, 667).[14] The linguistic turn in social sciences of the 1980s replaced material analysis of capitalism and political economy with the foci of culture, contestation over meaning and the construction of collective identities (Hetland and Goodwin 2014, 88). In other words, 'identity' supplanted 'interests' as the primary concern of scholars studying social movements (Krinsky 2014, 106). 'Identity-oriented' scholarship began to focus on 'the availability of organisational resources, the ability of movement leaders to produce appropriate ideological representations, and the presence of a favourable political context', arguing that this enables theorisation of heterogeneous movements with cultural concerns articulated in the sphere of civil society (Della Porta and Diani 2006, 63).

On the other side of the Atlantic, scholars galvanised by the civil rights, anti-war and feminist movements of the 1960s developed a slightly different approach to studying the shift of movements to action. Authors placed different 'objective' factors—'organisation, interests, resources, opportunities and strategies' (Cohen 1985, 674)—at the centre of the study of mass mobilisations, developing a number of different approaches, including the pure-rational actor approach (Olson 1965), the organisational-entrepreneurial approach (McCathy and Zald 1977, McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1988, 1996) and the political-conflict model (Tilly et al. 1975, Gamson 1975). In these paradigms, social movements are understood through a conflict model of collective action where institutional and non-institutional collective action are fundamentally the same. Movements are modelled as rational and their emergence and success explained through their access to resources, organisation

[14] For examples of the arguments for these perceived shifts see Della Porta and Diana 2006, Habermas 1981, Laclau and Mouffe 1985, Melucci 1980, 1984, 1985, Snow, Soule and Kriesi 2004, Torraine 1981, 1985, 1988.

and opportunities for collective action, as well as their internal bureaucratic structure (Cohen 1985, 675). The rise of rational choice theory in political science evidently had a profound impact on the US RM school, with adherents of this approach concentrating on 'positivist methods and rational calculation' needed to ensure social science was practiced more as a hard science than as a philosophy (Davis 1999, 588).

Social Movement Theory and Latin America

The European 'identity-oriented' NSM-perspective proved popular with Latin American scholars from the 1990s onwards, initially side-lining the American 'resource mobilisation' approach.[15] Latin Americanist Diane E. Davis (1999, 586) argues that the reasons for privileging the European approach over the American are three-fold. Firstly, the US 'resource mobilisation' school concentrates on strategies and resources that are successful in extracting results from the state. This approach did not have traction in a context where, following authoritarian regimes, processes of democratisation and the rise of neoliberalism, the state was reframed as 'the enemy', shepherding Latin American scholarship away from state-centric approaches. Secondly, the crisis of ISI and the rise of despotic dictatorships destroyed the class foundations of Latin American social theory, whilst accelerating rural-urban migration simultaneously transformed the social composition of Latin American societies, catalysing new movements, especially feminist movements (Foweraker 1995, 5). Thirdly, intellectual currents in Latin America were heavily influenced by European scholarship in the 1960s and 1970s, with many Latin American scholars travelling to Europe for doctoral studies in social sciences and philosophy. A number of Latin America's preeminent sociologists studied under Alan Torraine, one of the leading lights within the 'identity-oriented' approach to social movements (Davis 1999, 588).

In the Latin American context, NSM-theorists have been accused of 'bend[ing] the analytical stick too far, towards a seemingly autonomous cultural sphere' (Webber 2011b, 6). The resultant theory, detached from socio-economic dynamics and considerations of political economy, is unable to account for the

[15] For two of the best and most well-respected examples of this cultural approach to social movements, see Escobar and Alvarez, 1992 and Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998.

social contradictions caused by increasing inequality both nationally and internationally, or the crises in capitalism that have proliferated during the neoliberal period and catalysed social movements globally (Krinsky 2014, 107). Moreover, historian Greg Grandin (2005, 193) highlights that framing NSM using identity and culture obscures the continuities of new social movements with the old class-based movements. Given the focus of this thesis on the broader historical dynamics of the Pink Tide, the absence of political economy and a theoretical rupture between pre-existing social organisations and new social movements is hugely problematic.

Following the initial exclusion of RM approaches in the Latin American literature, Davis notes that US scholarship on social movements increasingly began to penetrate debates on Latin American social movements. As the romanticism surrounding the transformative potential of social movements in NSM-theory became more apparent, theorists moved away from simple celebration of cultural and political expressions to approaches that tried to understand *how* and *why* social movements were successful politically and their potential limitations (Roberts 1997, 138–39). A prime example of this is the political opportunity structure (POS) framework, a theoretical elaboration of the RM school. Responding to the critique of lack of cultural specificity, identity has been increasingly incorporated into the POS framework, in the process becoming reconceptualised as relational and contingent rather than a non-problematic resource to be mobilised (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001, 133).

Despite these attempts by POS to understand the relationships between movements and the state, it also has its shortcomings. Firstly, POS was a theoretical framework developed to explain the ecology, peace and civil rights movements in the US. These movements focused upon making the political system function effectively for all citizens, regardless of race, through the development of political demands to be addressed by congress or the appropriate state body (Davis 1999, 594). The historical form of Latin American states, their limited capacity to implement public policy and the particular history of democracy in the region makes the drivers of social movement formation and success quite different from the US context. Secondly, and drawing from the first critique, anthropologist Marc Edelman (2001, 290) highlights that POS pays little attention to the *social construction* of identity and therefore of the POS model itself, which becomes ‘bloodless’ as it is evacuated of historical and social context, incapable of explaining its own central

processes (Krinsky 2014, 106). Thirdly, social movement scholars Donatella Della Porta and Mario Diani (2006, 17) highlight the wide-range of variables that have been integrated into this framework, increasing its explanatory power but reducing its specificity. The POS thus runs the risk of becoming a 'dustbin' in which any and every variable relevant to social movements can be placed, leading it to explain nothing at all. Fourthly, political economist Jeffery Webber (2011b, 8) argues that the narrow focus of the POS on institutional settings, regime changes and political democratisation does not adequately account for associated transformations in the economic environment. The structural changes of capitalism undergone in the neoliberal period and the resource boom since the election of the Latin American Left to power are sidelined and remain outside the explanatory remit of the POS-framework, leaving the central dynamics of Latin America's Pink Tide unexplainable.

Whilst both the RM and NSM schools offer useful theoretical tools for examining the local and institutional contexts of how and why social movements emerge and are successful, they are inadequate. Social movement scholarship has preoccupied itself with 'short-term shifts in "cultural framings", social networks and especially "political opportunities"', often leaving the long-term dynamics of capitalism neglected' (Hetland and Goodwin 2014, 86). In order to properly understand the social movements that have formed an integral part of the Latin American Pink Tide—and its governments—broader considerations of political economy, state formation and class formation must be central to analysis. So, as we shall see later, must the production of space.

Sites of Social Change: Studying the City

Other innovative approaches to studying political change and social movements have focused on the spaces of social movements and the social, economic and political contexts within which they struggle. For most of the world today, these spaces are cities, particularly the informalised spaces where new urban migrants and the urban working-classes are found. Those studying urban space have uncovered a complex dance performed daily by city residents as they navigate an insecure and precarious world (Auyero 2014, Fischer et al. 2014, Holston 2008, Holston and Appadurai, 1996, Velasco 2015). Many authors have noted that cities have become a terrain of struggle

where social conflict increasingly plays out (Fernandes 2014, 192, Holston 2008, Pérez 2017, Sassen 1998, Velasco 2015). 'Cities… are especially privileged sites for considering the current renegotiations of citizenship', state anthropologists James Holston and Arjun Appadurai (1996, 188–89), where 'citizens are producing new (in some cases expansive, in some restrictive) notions of membership and solidarity'. Holston (2008, 204) notes that exclusion from 'legal society' and differentiated forms of citizenship create paradoxical results. In their attempts to be incorporated into mainstream society, citizens use self-construction, ambiguities in the law and grassroots activism (their exclusion) to create new innovative forms of inclusion.

Cities are localised expressions of global dynamics. 'In the era of mass migration, globalization of the economy, and rapid circulation of rights discourse,' Holston and Appadurai (1996, 189) contend, 'cities represent the localization of global forces as much as they do the dense articulation of national resources, persons, and projects'. Urbanisation is not a new phenomenon (see King 1990), however its pace and the transformation of cities into spaces of global capital have accelerated over the past forty years (Therborn 2017, Ch.9). Global capital under neoliberalism has used the city as an 'organizational commodity' and as an arena for the 'overvalorization of corporate capital' (Sassen 1998, xx), becoming the principal site where the contradictions of globalised capital are found. Global capital does not defend cities but reorganises them to shape its needs, often at the expense of city residents (Sarlo 2008, 45). It is unsurprising, therefore, that urban spaces have also materialised as 'a strategic terrain for a whole series of conflicts and contradictions' (Sassen 1998, xxv). In Latin America, many of the movements that started the Pink Tide were a response to the transformation of cities by neoliberalism and the restructuring of the political economy of the region. The unequal and uneven nature of urbanisation over the past century has produced new textures of space and forms of class, class struggle (social movements), class accumulation and state-society relations. The *piqueteros*, the radical housing movement in Chile, and the urban-indigenous movements in La Paz/El Alto, Cochabamba and Plan 3000 are all expressions of the discontent with neoliberalism that unfolded across urban Latin America. This points to the need to examine the city and urban space more closely.

Mainstream Perspectives on the 'Informal City'

A common presentation of informalised urban spaces and practices is as a social pathology to be eradicated. This standpoint depicts shantytowns using dichotomies of rural/urban and informal/formal, presenting them as an exogenous 'problem' to be eliminated through the correct policy prescriptions. In Latin America, this narrative assumed a racial aspect and the poor were blamed for their 'culture of poverty' (Fischer 2014b, 33–36). Although this perspective dates from the nineteenth century, it was popularised by Oscar Lewis's (1961) study of migrants in Mexico City. Despite Janice Perlman (1976) dispelling the 'myth of marginality' long ago, this perspective has not disappeared. Informality and poverty are perpetually demonised, with the criminalisation of the poor used to exclude the working-classes, people of colour and indigenous people from dominant society and justify state-violence perpetrated against them (Irazábal and Angotti 2017, 7).

Across Latin America, shantytowns and their informalised market places, street vendors and small-scale workshops have become synonymous with dirt, poverty and crime. In Bolivia, a place where the informal city thrives, 'the majority of the media and urban intellectuals generate a combination of biased discourses and misinformation that, in the majority of cases, paints the popular economy [explained below] as the worst problem facing the country' (Tassi et al. 2013, 2). Popular market vendors are often mentioned in the same breath as contraband and drugs (Tassi et al. 2013, 3). It is argued that they 'invade' the pavements with their stalls showing little regard for the social norms and laws respected by the urbanite middle-class, and are responsible for perpetual health crises due to the lack of hygiene and cleanliness of popular markets (Andia 2002, 28, Kirshner 2010b, 157, Tassi et al. 2013, 3–4).

Another influential perspective on informality emerged with anthropologist Keith Hart's (1971) seminal article on Accra, Ghana, and his 'discovery' of the informal economic sector. Hart argued that the informal economic sector offered a wealth of opportunities to the poor through petty capitalist activities and small-scale entrepreneurialism (Hart 1971, 67). This argument was taken up with gusto by Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto (1989), who argued that informality—of markets as well as housing—is a result of entry barriers to formal spheres, Kaftkaesque bureaucratic state procedures and the absence of property rights. According to de Soto, the poor actually possess a mass of wealth that they cannot tap

due to their lack of titles and deeds, so they create the informal 'sector' as a 'spontaneous and collective response to over-regulation by predatory state apparatuses' (Rizzo 2017, 9). The poor, argues de Soto (2001, cited in Rizzo 2017, 9), 'do not so much break the law as the law breaks them'. The informal sector is presented as an infinitely elastic 'arena' (an object rather than a process) capable of absorbing all surplus labour that (importantly for the policymakers behind the explosion of microcredit during the 1990s) is discrete from the formal sector.[16] The diversity of activity in places like El Alto and Plan 3000, and the imagination and creativity people use to survive in 'informal cities', reveal a group of 'micro-entrepreneurs' held back by the limited administrative and legal capacities of states in the Global South.

Scholars have noted a number of problems with de Soto's approach. Firstly, to speak of 'informality' as an object—an ontological reality absent of legal contracts or formal regulations, separated from a legally robust 'formal' sphere—is to ignore the interdependence of informal and formal practices and spaces. Writing at the same time as de Soto, scholars Manuel Castells and Alejandro Portes (1989, 26) assumed a more critical approach, arguing 'the informal [economy] is an integral component of total national economies'. They and their colleagues also highlighted how informality is *lived*, a set of processes that are not outside of capitalist dynamics but an integral part of them, as opposed to a set of characteristics that one can assign to certain spaces, people or jobs (see also Breman 2013, Mezzadri 2018).

Building upon this, secondly, is the absence of class from the 'de Sotoan' perspective. De Soto himself famously claimed 'Marx would probably be shocked to find how in developing countries much of the teeming mass does not consist of oppressed legal proletarians but of oppressed extralegal small entrepreneurs' (cited in Davis 2006, 179). However, the growth of the informal economy is just as much a result of profit-maximising strategies of 'formal' capitalist firms in the face of crises of profitability as an entrepreneurial strategy by workers (Rizzo 2017, 10–11). In his seminal book *Planet of Slums*, Mike Davis (2006, 180) highlights how de Soto fails to distinguish between different strata of the working-classes. The 'informal petty bourgeoisie' who run small micro-firms, employ a handful of employees and pursue

[16] This idea has proved particularly popular with technocrats from the World Bank (1996, 2000).

(limited) capital accumulation experience informality differently from the 'informal proletariat' who sell their wage labour in disguised forms to the former. In their study of the Latin American class structure, Portes and Kelly Hoffman (2003, 46–49) estimate that the petty bourgeoisie account for 8.5 percent of the labour force, whereas the informal proletariat represent 45.9 percent of the workforce. In short, class matters.[17]

In light of these shortfalls of the mainstream literature, it is necessary to turn to more critical literature on informality. For the purpose of this thesis, 'informality' is understood as the confluence of dynamic processes stripping workers of legal rights and recourse, increasing the inconsistency and irregularity of the working day and the forms of tasks that expend labour power, transforming the working conditions and everyday lives of the working-classes. It also includes practices the working-classes perform in the gaps left by the neoliberal state: these produce homes, neighbourhoods and spaces of residence, and ensure the reproduction of their families and the working-classes writ large under the constraints of the capitalist social formation.

Political Ethnography and Studying the Everyday

The study of urban spaces through political ethnography has yielded some key interventions and lines of inquiry, including the relationship between formality and informality, everyday state-citizen relations and the quotidian experiences of poverty. Political ethnographers have provided rich ethnographical detail of life in informal cities. In their book addressing the Buenos Aires shantytown Villa Inflamble, Javier Auyero and Débora Alejandra Switstun (2009, 6) present a superb study of incongruence, the confusion and inconsistency that characterise the experiences of living in urban margins and reveal the social construction of toxicity and its effects on people's lives. Following in the footsteps of Akhil Gupta's (1995) path breaking article on Indian state bureaucracy, Auyero (2012) has also provided a microscopic account of state-society relations through the waiting rooms of different state departments in the city of Buenos Aires, showing in painstaking detail the challenges of accessing the state for working-class people under particular conditions.

[17] The concept of class is outlined in more detail below.

Furthermore, political ethnographers have problematised the relationship between informal shantytowns and the so-called 'formal city', forcefully arguing that they cannot be separated analytically and understood as discrete entities. 'Marginal spaces and spaces of exclusion', contend anthropologists Barbara Drieskens and Franck Mermier (2007, 17), are integral to the production of urban space. In Latin American cities, 'informal' urban space—so often dismissed as 'unfortunate and accidental scars on the urban landscape'—is an integral part of both the economic and political functioning of cities (Fischer 2014a, 1). A number of scholars have demonstrated the extent of this interconnectivity empirically. In his study of urban squatter movements in Santiago, Chile, Edward Murphy (2014, 71) argues that legal status and recognition by the state—in a word the *formalisation* of urban space—did not necessarily change the social and economic stigma that residents faced. Squatters were constantly moving in and out of the liminal spaces of the state, permanently constrained by socio-spatial configurations of the city itself. Home ownership and legal titles did not prevent the next generation of social movements coalescing around the same issues relating to housing, due to the deteriorating *quality* of formal housing (Pérez 2017). In Brazil, Bryan McCann (2014) reveals the blurred boundaries between 'formal' middle-class neighbourhoods and the 'informal' *favelas*. McCann shows that battles against gentrification during the late-1960s and 1970s built strong social bonds and relations of interdependence between a Carioco slum and the middle-class neighbourhood that it surrounded (although this later subsided in the face of drug-related violence). Mariana Cavalcanti (2014) further explores this dynamic between formality and informality in Rio de Janeiro using threshold markets. She reveals the interrelated nature of developments inside and outside the favela through changing house prices and the altering social composition of formal housing occupants, many of whom have moved to apartment blocks from the *favela* across the road. These studies unveil the multiple facets of these inexorably related urban realities and the multiple and complex realities of shantytowns missing from the dominant narratives outlined above.

The Popular Economy and Globalisation From Below

Anthropologists studying informal cities in Latin America have focused on how settlements have been spatially centred on popular marketplaces, spaces which

picked up the slack in the demand for labour during neoliberalism. Latin American anthropologists in particular have taken up the mantle and developed a body of literature on what they call the 'popular economy' and 'globalisation from below'. The term 'popular economy' was initially used to describe the informal economy (Razeto et al. 1990[1983]). Post-colonial scholar Aníbel Quijano (2014, 228–29) attempted to provide a working definition of a popular economy as one where the protagonists do not control the principal productive resources, state power or the market;[18] however, this definition could be used to describe pretty much any economy in capitalism and so is too vague for the needs of this thesis. In her extension of the popular economy to 'neoliberalism from below', Argentine scholar Verónica Gago (2015, 14), argues that networks of practices and knowledge outside government control 'function as the motor of a powerful popular economy that combines self-managed community skills and intimate know-how as technologies of mass self-entrepreneurship' in the context of neoliberalism. Gago is quick to stress both the political economy dynamics of neoliberalism from above *and* the ways in which popular economy actors internalise and reproduce neoliberalism through their daily actions and interactions from below. Here the popular economy is understood in these terms, capturing the informal economy produced by neoliberalism and the particular social and cultural forms used and/or produced to mediate this informal economy.

Following this line of inquiry, Gordon Matthews, Gustavo Lins Ribeiro and Carlos Alba Vega (2012) have begun to use the term 'globalisation from below' to underscore the regional and even global scope of the popular economy, whilst simultaneously differentiating it from 'globalisation from above' led by powerful states, international institutions, and big corporations (Ribeiro 2012b, 229). For these authors, globalisation from below is

> the transnational flow of people and goods involving relatively small amounts of capital and informal, often semi-legal or illegal transactions, often associated with "the developing world" but in fact apparent across the globe (Matthews and Alba Vega 2012, 1).

It captures the extensive spatial dimension of the popular economy, which for Matthews, Ribeiro and Alba Vega is organised into a series of knots (popular

[18] Quijano was an important figure within dependency theory and initially self-identified as a Marxist. He was a central participant in debates around marginality in Latin America which resonate with the popular economy debates outlined here.

marketplaces) connected through networks of (mostly low-budget) goods and by traders who participate in the global economy from a subordinate position (Ribeiro 2012a, 37).

This spatial schema stresses the particular local elements contained in translocal networks, concurrently framing capitalist relations as embedded within pre-existing social relations. The phrase 'globalisation from below' is designed to at once capture the hierarchy that still exists between these two types of globalisation and the particular economic forms that emerge in the cracks of the hegemonic structures. Part of the power of 'globalisation from below', its proponents argue, is its ability to transform and mutate existing social relations, beliefs, practices and knowledges into unique economic forms able to fill the interstitial spaces where the popular economy operates (Tassi et al. 2015, 118). Unconventional practices—such as the presence of reciprocal exchange and communal practices in popular marketplaces (Quijano 2014, 216, Razeto et al. 1990, Tassi et al. 2015, 110)—are used to mediate exchange between vendor and consumer and to foster the interpersonal relations (including cultural and religious links) that together form markets (Tassi et al. 2015, 63). Thus a salient aspect of the Popular Economy School has been its positioning against what proponents see as economistic perspectives on informality that downplay political, social and cultural features of the popular economy (Tassi et al. 2015, 7).

Authors studying the popular economy have mapped out the trading routes that link Egypt to China and the path of goods along commodity chains from the production nodes in China to the sprawling markets of the popular economy in Latin America (see Matthews, Ribeiro and Vega, 2012). Some authors have concentrated on borders: between different nation states, between the formal and the informal, between legality and illegality and between the licit and the illicit (e.g., Abraham and Schendel, 2005, Matthews, Ribeiro and Vega 2012, 224, Müller 2017, Ribeiro, 2006).

In the Bolivian case, anthropologists Juan Arbona, María Elena Canedo, Carmen Medeiros and Nico Tassi have mapped out the routes of different goods to different markets and the specific mechanisms—drawn from local practices, cultures and beliefs—through which production and distribution are organised in the popular economy. Julianne Müller (2017) has built on this work and explored the integration of 'formal' and 'informal' economies in La Paz, overcoming the perceived antagonisms between the two and discussing the uneven processes that formalise and informalise

actors and the ways that actors themselves try to become formalised or informalised from below.

Political Ethnography and Popular Economy's Shortcomings

Although not always immediately obvious, both political ethnography and Latin American anthropologists studying the popular economy have been captivated by wider recent intellectual trends in the social sciences. In their quest to unveil the hidden (in plain sight) everyday reality of informal cities, these scholars have turned away from the study of grand narratives (capitalism) and totalising categories (class), towards a focus on the composite parts of society and how they fit together (i.e., the study of networks and knots). This shift was in part a response to the call by Actor-Network Theory scholar Bruno Latour (2005, 179) not to 'focus on capitalism' but to 'follow the actors themselves' and

> try to catch up with their often wild innovations in order to learn from them what the collective existence has become in their hands, which methods they have elaborated to make it fit together, which accounts could best define the new associations that they have been forced to establish (Latour 2005, 12).

A quick interrogation of the analytic frame by popular economy scholars demonstrates the extent and impact of this turn. In the introduction to their book, Matthews Ribeiro and Vega (2012, 10) make an illustrative statement:

> We who edit this book believe that globalisation from below is beneficial, in that it provides the poor of the world a taste of the goods of the rich, and enables hundreds of millions across the globe to make a living.

Whether Matthews, Ribeiro and Vega recognise it or not, in the attempt to follow the 'transnational flow of goods and people' they strip the lived experiences of the working-classes who engage in globalisation from below. The quote above reveals how scholars of globalisation from below reproduce a normative perspective on the market as a neutral sphere that one enters to fulfil her utility derived from liberal and neo-classical theory. The resultant theory thus mirrors a De Sotoan perspective, and as such, it is inadequate for the same reasons I outlined above for the work of Hernando de Soto.

From political ethnography, Auyero (2012, 11) also advocates an analytical shift away from broader social dynamics:

> [Poor people's] concrete experiences in specific social universes are the objects of our ethnographic inquiry... They matter because the destitute in our work do not experience ''neoliberalism'' or ''globalization'' in a strict sense, but rather shabby waiting rooms, uncomfortable lines, endless delays, and meagre and random welfare benefit.

For Auyero, the places where neoliberalism or globalisation appear—rather than the broader concepts themselves—should be the focus of social inquiry. Whilst Auyero's argument mirrors that of Latour, he is more explicitly influenced by the work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu (1977, 3) attempts to disrupt classical ethnography in order to facilitate 'a science of the dialectical relations between the objective structures to which the objectivist mode of knowledge gives access'. This study of quotidian practices developed into a framework for evaluating the construction and reproduction of ideology and power through what Bourdieu (2014) called 'symbolic capital' and 'symbolic violence', providing a rich theoretical perspective with which to examine the incongruent practices that comprise everyday lives (Auyero 2009, 10) and the production of social inertia that ensures the production and reproduction of domination (Auyero 2007, 66).

The insights of Bourdieu are often integrated into sociological and anthropological analyses relatively uncritically (Fine 2002, 119, see also Riley 2015, 2017). However, some Marxist scholars have evaluated his approach and argued that, in the quest to categorise, Bourdieu's analytical categories (particularly class) are evacuated of their lived essence, reducing his analysis to a 'more or less static essentialism, or a more or less abstract voluntarism' (Lefebvre 2014[1981], 651). Bourdieu thus provides a *description* of the dynamics of class which lacks the *content* of class—the social relations that comprise it and how economic dynamics shape (but do not determine) political considerations.

Returning to the Auyero quote above, whilst it is true that the spaces of poverty are characterised by quotidian practices, including waiting, it is also true that people are poor in capitalism thanks to the capital-labour relation and the extended processes of its social reproduction (even if their experiences of poverty are shaped by other factors). People do experience 'neoliberalism' and 'globalization' in very concrete

ways, and their lives are shaped by how these wider dynamics play out in mundane spaces. Thus in his analysis, Auyero renders the broader 'abstract' dynamics distinct from the concrete everyday experiences of the poor, creating a false dichotomy stressing the latter at the expense of the former. The same is true of his work with Switston (2009). In their study of Villa Inflamable, the omnipotence of Shell and the other multinational corporations in the industrial compound next to the shantytown is under analysed, as are the particular capital-labour relations that undoubtedly play a part in shaping the experiences and liminality of Inflamable residents. These political economic considerations were placed outside the scope of their research, as were the changing dynamics of poorer neighbourhoods under the progressive regimes of Nestor and Christina Kirchner (2003–2015). Similar criticisms can be levied against the work of fine-grained analyses of Cavalcanti (2014) and McCann (2014) in Brazil outlined above, as well as that of Murphy (2014) in Chile. The combination of a shift away from broader social dynamics and the content of class yields strangely ahistorical accounts of poverty, exclusion and the informal city as quotidian considerations crowd out any other concerns.

Framing the Pink Tide: Passive Revolution

A more effective way to evaluate recent social and political trends in Latin America, I argue, is through 'passive revolution', a critical framework developed by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci to analyse the different reactions of dominant classes to immanent challenges from below using a comparative historical methodology.[19] Many critical Latin American scholars have turned to Gramsci, not only because of the explanatory power that his concepts—particularly passive revolution—have in the Pink Tide context, but also because of the intellectual legacy of the previous moment of progressive governments in Latin American history. In Gramsci, sections of the Latin American Left found ways to comprehend and survive the violent military backlash to the populist regimes of the Southern Cone during the 1960s and 1970s (Freeland 2014, 279–80). This generation of Latin American interpreters of Gramsci—Carlos Nelson Coutinho in Brazil, Juan Carlos Portantiero and José Aricó in Argentina and

[19] Building on Edward Said (2000), Adam Morton (2013, 50) argues that the power of Gramsci's methodology (as a 'living philology') allows his theory to 'travel' to other geographical and historical contexts without being reduced to a set of tools to be 'applied'.

René Zavaleta in Bolivia—have all acted as points of reference for the current intellectual and political cadres of the Latin American Left.[20]

Gramsci first used passive revolution to explore how the liberal bourgeoisie were able to enact 'revolution without a revolution' during the Italian *Risorgimento* (Coutinho 2012, 39). He extended the concept to understand differences in the processes of economic and political modernisation between eighteenth century France, Germany and Italy, and later once again to analyse the period of bourgeois consolidation through Fascism and Fordism after the Russian Revolution (Modonesi 2012, 140, Morton 2007, 63–72, Thomas 2009b 146–47 Webber 2016, 1858).

'The notion of "passive revolution" seeks', argues Italian-Mexican Marxist Massimo Modonesi (2013, 211–12), 'to realise a combination—unequal and dialectical—of two tendencies or moments: restoration and renovation, preservation and transformation or, as Gramsci himself indicated, "conservation-innovation"'. This dialectical combination is by no means pre-determined; rather it is contingent on whether 'revolution or restoration… predominates' (Gramsci 1971, cited in Morton 2010, 316). It is not, as British Marxist Alex Callinicos (2010, 505) warned, 'another way of referring to the dynamism and flexibility of capitalism, a distinction without a difference', but a particular response to political crises generated from the contradictions of capitalism and revolutionary forces agitating from below. Passive revolution captures how, in the face of political crises, the dominant classes do not completely destroy the challenges from below and are forced into concessions which can be, at times, against the interests of their class. As such, progressive outcomes to processes of passive revolution are perfectly possible (Modonesi 2012, 145). The dynamic is thus not merely one of top-down imposition or coercion from the dominant classes, but rather an attempt to dominate society determined through 'the capacity to promote conservative reforms made up as "revolutionary" transformations and to promote a passive consent/consensus [*consenso*] to the regime of the dominant classes' (Modonesi 2013, 214).

[20] For a good overview of their contributions, see Freeland (2014). For a synthesis of Coutinho's work on Gramsci, see Coutinho (2012). For the Argentinean scholars, see Aricó (1988) and Portentiero (1981). In Bolivia, a three-part anthology on Zavaleta's work has been published, with the second part (Zavaleta 2013) containing Zavaleta's Gramscian intellectual phase.

First Moment: Catharsis

Gramsci divides passive revolution into two stages—'catharsis' and 'transformism'—to better understand the dynamics contained in the restoration-revolution dialectic. Catharsis is the revolutionary opening from below, seen by Gramsci (Q10II §6, cited in Thomas 2009a, 263) as 'the passage from "objective to subjective" and from "necessity to freedom"'. In this context, the horizons of organisations and collective action of individuals expand from a myopic perspective in defence of the status quo and individual or sectional interests (economic corporatism), to a radical horizon envisioning the transformation of society, the state, and the economy (the ethical-political).

In this sense, Gramsci followed Marx's preoccupation with 'praxis' (which is partly why Gramsci labeled Marxism the 'philosophy of praxis'), a concern present from very early on in Marx's writings. In his critique of German philosophy (and in particular Georg Hegel), Marx (1977, 137) writes:

> The weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism of the weapon, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses. Theory is capable of gripping the masses as soon as it demonstrates ad hominem [to the person], and it demonstrates ad hominem as soon as it becomes radical. To be radical is to grasp the root of the matter. But, for human beings, *the root is human beings themselves* (my emphasis).

Radicalism is challenging the root of social phenomenon through social interaction with other humans. It appears *only* in material struggle, ergo the jump from economic corporatism to the ethical-political *always* occurs through class struggle, constructing the subject through collective action and expanding boundaries of the possible, both in spatial terms, as revolutionary ideas spread through the subaltern population, and in ideological terms, as revolution begins to seem possible (Tapia 2011, 77). This represents the revolutionary component of the revolution-restoration dialectic, and is the political articulation of the subaltern classes.

Second Moment: Transformism

This radical activism and challenges to the dominant milieu provokes a reaction from above. The jump from corporatism to definite political action by the subaltern classes produces a crisis in hegemony in the state, which no longer possesses the moral order strong enough to lead the public. The central forces of represented and representatives diverge, and the once hegemonic apparatuses of the state are incapable of leading and dominating society. However, the disorganised masses of the subaltern classes are unable to capitalise on the crumbling of state power, as they do not possess the capacity to project a centralised unity to replace the state (Thomas 2009b, 222). An impasse emerges where the dominant social forces can retain their position only through coercive force (Gramsci 2011b, 211, Q7 §80). These tensions surpass the levee of the political terrain and engulf the entire state structure, transferring confidence and trust from political institutions to civil society institutions normally insulated from the vicissitudes of the turbulent political climate (for a variety of socio-historical reasons). Gramsci argued this is an 'organic crisis', because, as Thomas (2009b, 147) highlights, 'it places the very foundations of bourgeois hegemony in doubt'. It 'consist[s] precisely in the fact that the old is dying', states Gramsci (2011a, 32, Q3 §34), 'and the new cannot be born'. In this moment of impasse the state absorbs the challenge mounted from below by the subaltern classes, 'consolidating [the] state apparatus and its "representative" organs in civil society' (Thomas, 2009b, 151). Gramsci (2011b, 257, Q8, §36) labels this process 'transformism', consisting of an initial 'molecular' transformation as individual political figures are absorbed into the dominant classes, followed by a quantitative shift whereby entire subaltern groups are subverted and absorbed. This creates an integral state (Gramsci, 2011b, 169, Q7, §16), where the institutions and actors of political society are protected by the 'trenches' of civil society organisations newly articulated in political society as a result of transformism.

In the case of Latin America's Pink Tide, the incorporation of popular sectors struggling from below into the state was a multifaceted progress which differed from country to country, due to the heterogeneous popular sector landscape produced by neoliberalism (Rossi and Silva 2018, 9). This second incorporation of popular sectors in Latin America, argues Eduardo Silva (2018, 310), was a 'process of recognition and inclusion of popular sectors and subaltern groups' interests, as well as frequently but

not always their organizations in the political arena'. In the Bolivian case I have identified three moments of transformism: (1) co-optation from above; (2) the creation of parallel social organisations by the government; and (3) the propensity of social organisations to be co-opted.

However, the second incorporation surpassed mere state corporatism, with left governments including popular sectors in their political projects, Silva (2018, 312) contends, through 'segmented popular interest intermediation regime[s]'. Because of the variegated character and political importance of different popular sector groups, governments built different incorporation mechanisms for different groups, often on an ad hoc basis, shaped by the institutional capacity of the state. As well as more traditional forms of incorporation, such as clientelism (the trading of votes for state funds), these segmented regimes also include new forms of incorporation, particularly state managerialism and informal contestation. The former is when left governments recognise popular sector demands and formulate technocratic policy responses without the input of affected sectors, whereas the latter is when progressive regimes announce policy and affected groups protest, eventually entering into direct negotiations with the government (Silva 2018, 313). Although both of these modes of incorporation are present in Bolivia, the predominant form of state-society relations is informal contestation, as political incorporation has largely—although as my three moments of transformism suggest, not entirely—been from below in this case (Rossi and Silva 2018, 13).

Spaces of Passive Revolution

An often-forgotten element that is reintroduced to the passive revolution frame of this thesis is space. 'Space and geography were far more than a passive backdrop for intellectual reflection for Gramsci', contends geographer Stefan Kipfer (2013, 85), 'They provided crucial, albeit not theorized, mediations of his concepts… and the problem of hegemony'. Critical geographers have stressed that Gramsci 'understands space as… produced, differentiated, and contested within any hegemonic project' (Ekers and Loftus 2013, 26–27). Adam Morton (2013, 48–49) argues that, for Gramsci, passive revolution was 'directly related to the spatial conditioning of the fractured process of state formation in Italy' and therefore must be understood as 'an emergent spatialization strategy that structured and shaped state power'. Passive revolution

analyses ‘uneven and discontinuous geographies’ and is concerned with how relational dynamics between areas of backwardness and economic ‘progress’, and between city and country, bear on processes of class struggle and state formation (Morton 2013, 51).

Every society (or mode of production), argued French philosopher Henri Lefebvre (1991), creates its own space. Space under capitalism has assumed a very particular form as ‘abstract space’, as opposed to the ‘absolute space’ of the physical (natural) world. Abstract space emerges in capitalism as production processes become alienated from society and as the form and function of buildings and space become detached from one another, their relationship obscured by facades. A corollary of capitalist expansionist tendencies is the extension of abstract space necessarily involving the destruction of absolute (natural) space. Abstract space produces a centre (whether the city or the apparent Leviathan form of the centralised state), which in turn enables the reproduction of capitalism, an observation made not only by Lefebvre but also by Zavaleta (2013[1983a], 616) and Gramsci (see Morton 2013). Societies that do not create their own spaces and merely occupy the space of others will be relegated to the realm of solely ‘culture’ and doomed to extinction (Lefebvre 1991, 53).

Abstract space has emerged as a means of control and domination within capitalist societies (Lefebvre 1991, 27). Indeed, as Lefebvre (1991, 55) states: ‘today more than ever, the class struggle is inscribed in space’. Space is a key component in building (and preventing) class solidarities (Featherstone 2013). Ideological and political hegemony in any society depends on an ability to control the material contexts of personal and social experience (Harvey 1989, 227). Gramsci understood this well, seeing ‘modern(ist) urbanization as key to the demographic reordering of the “terrain” of hegemony… and interpreted urban space (architecture, the layout and names of streets) as key “ideological material” for bourgeois rule’ (Kipfer 2013, 90).

The power exerted *by* space (as an instrumental space of political power) becomes obscured through three ‘formants’ (moments of resonance) (Lefebvre 1991, 285). The first is what Lefebvre calls ‘the geometric formant’: how absolute space becomes Euclidian space with apparent homogeneity and reducibility (e.g., from three dimensions to a two-dimensional map). The second is the ‘optical (or visual) formant’: how sight supersedes all other senses and comes to predominate. This has occurred through two moments: ‘the first is metaphoric (the act of writing and what is written…),

and the second is metonymic' (the transformation of the visual part into a whole) (Lefebvre 1991, 286). The third formant is the 'phallic formant', how masculinity has come to dominate femininity through the rise of vertical constructions in urban space (e.g., skyscrapers and apartment blocks). These three formants work in tandem and imbue abstract space with an apparent readability, a transparency that deceives (Lefebvre 1991, 287–88). Not only does the looking glass refract processes of power, it also obscures and excludes moments of violence and the formational processes of the capitalist system, at once legitimising the current system and preventing other social formations from emerging from similar conditions. As Lefebvre's states, '*the space of a (social) order is hidden in the order of space*' (Lefebvre 1991, 289, original emphasis).

There are multiple ways to disrupt the logic of abstract space. Class struggle is the most visible example, but practices that subvert the dominant production of space itself can also prove effective. The spontaneous architecture of self-construction, argues Lefebvre (1991, 373–74), produces a 'spatial duality', whereby the effective organisation of space by residents rather than the state produces the impression of a duality of political power. The struggle to survive through practices of social *reproduction* confronts the dominant logic of capitalist space organised through *production.* The disequilibrium contained in these two opposing logics facing off makes liminal spaces like El Alto and Plan 3000 places of *radical potential*, albeit buried beneath the drudgery and hardship that poverty, urbanisation and proletarianisation entail. This radical potential appears in moments of catharsis and forms an integral part of working-class struggle. Moreover, and importantly for the Latin American case, transformism can also have a spatial dimension. The progressive governments during the Pink Tide incorporated popular sectors organised through territory and 'defined by the physical location of the actors', including rural indigenous movements and urban neighbourhood organisations (Rossi 2018, 24). This had the effect of varying transformism across space as public policies and pathways to the state (and its resources) were directed at localities (rather than sectors), determined by the needs and the militancy of a place's constituents.

Moving Beyond Passive Revolution

The schema of passive revolution provides a way to understand *how* and *why* protests against neoliberalism were initially successful, and later became nullified and integrated into Latin America states. It is a particularly powerful lens through which to examine social movements, state formation and political economy, offering 'a sophisticated, historically [and spatially] informed appreciation of how social struggles and social movements develop' (Humphrys 2014, 368). Part of the power of Gramscian theory, as Aricó (1988, 112–13) argues, is the inseparability of the political, ideological and cultural, whose configurations and reconfigurations affect social reality as whole.

Numerous scholars have effectively described the second phase of the Pink Tide (the Left in power) as transformism (e.g., Castorina 2013, Gaudichaud 2014, Modonesi 2012, 2013, 2015, OSAL-Brasil 2011, Svampa 2017a, Tapia 2011, Webber 2016b).[21] It uncovers the complex dynamics underlying the contradiction between neo-extractivism and *vivir bien* (the neo-Andean concept of 'living-well') already noted by a number of authors (e.g., Arze 2016, Arze and Gomez 2013, Fontana 2013a, Gudynas 2011, López Flores 2014, Perreault 2015, Schavelzon 2015, 264–67, Tzeman 2013, Wanderley 2013, Webber 2015),[22] and the observed continuities and changes contained in progressive governments (e.g., Farthing and Kohl 2014, Katz 2015a, López and Vertiz 2015, Webber 2011b). Passive revolution helps trace the processes and dynamics underlying the Pink Tide governments in order to better understand how we arrived at the 'end of the cycle'.

However, although this perspective provides a framework to understand the general dynamics of the Pink Tide, it needs, I contend, to be refined to better capture the intertwined processes of state formation, class formation and negotiation between the government and social movement actors. Following the recommendations of Argentinean critical scholar Veronica Gago (2015, 302), I seek to move away from purely state-centric, top-down accounts of passive revolution and include the internal politics of social organisations. Gago warns that top down approaches risk downplaying the politics within (and between) the working-classes themselves,

[21] See McNelly (2017) for an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of these uses of Gramsci in the Bolivian context.
[22] This tension is another articulation of the 'internal tension between national-popular and popular-indigenous elements' (Baker 2015a, 283).

creating accounts that flatten out the incongruence of quotidian working-class life. Indeed, one of the major shortcomings of the discussions of the 'end of cycle' through passive revolution has been state-centricity that discounts the changing horizons and dynamics within the social movements themselves (Salazar, personal correspondence, 16/07/2017). This I hope to overcome through the integration of heuristic devices borrowed from anthropology literature on the state and a Thompsonian class perspective that focuses on the 'experiences' of the working-classes.[23]

Theorising the State from Below

In order to study state formation as a component of passive revolution, I borrow a number of heuristic devices from anthropology literature on the state. In this thesis I draw on Fernando Coronil's (1997, 116) proposal that the state is 'a complex ensemble of social relations mediated by things or thing-like objectifications of social practices', where the 'state-form works by establishing a relationship of equivalence between the general and particular, the abstract and the concrete'.[24] Such a conception of the state builds on Marx's conception of social relations 'not… as direct social relations between persons', but as what they really are, 'material relations between persons and social relations between things' (Marx 1982, 166). Thus, instead of seeing the state through a fetishised form as merely a complex of institutions, it is an ensemble of social relations that assume the form of institutions through the 'state effect'.

First Heuristic Device: The State Effect

The first heuristic device I have borrowed for studying the state is the 'state effect', which provides a way of analysing how the state assumes its fetishised form. The state effect is how the state emerges with the appearance of a 'knowable' object, a benevolent actor present to resolve society's woes and a phallic centre, the towering Leviathan. Drawing on Foucault's work on discipline and the formation of structured

[23] In contrast with Auyero, for Thompson experience is the study of broader dynamics playing out in the everyday rather than a move towards the quotidian at the expense of larger concerns, such as the dynamics of particular moments of capitalist development.
[24] Coronil was himself inspired by Philip Abram's (1988) seminal article on studying the state.

armed forces with power greater than its individual parts, Timothy Mitchell (2006, 180) argues that the state is formed by particular practices, controlled, constrained and contained by rules and regulations, which together produce a 'structural effect'. Through these consistently repeated practices a structure emerges that is greater than those individuals performing these practices. The state is thus 'an effect of mundane processes of spatial organisation, temporal arrangement, functional specification, supervision and surveillance, and representation that create the appearance of a world fundamentally divided into state and society or state and economy' (Mitchell 2006, 185). This effect is similar to the fetishisation of capital in the production circuit, and must be seen alongside capital and labour as part of the new modern subjectivities necessarily produced by capitalism (Mitchell 2006, 181). It is through the practices of individuals intertwined in the complex of social relations contained in the institutions of the state that the state itself comes to be formed, processes Bolivian Marxist René Zavaleta (2013[1983a], 615) called the production of 'state material', the social substance of state. It is this seeming prestidigitation—of conjuring an institution from thin air—that leads both Coronil (1997) and Michael Taussig (1997) to stress the state's magical properties.

The advantage of this approach to the state is that it disaggregates dynamics of state formation from dynamics of class formation and treats them as dialectically connected *processes* in the plural. Part of the difficulty of studying the state is the complex relationship between surplus and state appropriation—between the economic and political—masked by an appearance of separation (Zavaleta 2013[1983a], 613, see also Sayer 1987). Zavaleta (2013[1983a], 615) has argued that the extent to which value form has been generalised across society reveals the extent but not the form of state domination. More than just a tool of capital, the state is its own system of power and its own technique of production, an integral part 'of the modern reordering of space, time, and personhood' just as much as 'capital' and 'labour', and an aspect of 'the production of the new effects of abstraction and subjectivity' (Mitchell, 2006: 181).

In other words, the internal histories of the state within capitalism determine state form rather than any concrete law of capitalism itself. As Clarke (1990, 164) stresses, 'the state cannot be derived conceptually'. It can only be explored through historical and anthropological study of the social relations and the ways in which these relations are fetishised to form the state. This definition helps explain how illusions of

concreteness and existence are created by practices of the state, without falling into the trap of presenting the state as distinct from material practices or as solely symbolic (Coronil 1997, 116), explaining how the social relations particular to capitalism produce the fetishised form of the modern state.

Second Heuristic Device: State Effect versus State Affect

The second heuristic device is the distinction made by anthropologists Christopher Krupa and David Nugent (2015, 14) between 'state effect' and 'state affect'. Whereas the 'state effect' denotes practices, institutions and spaces of the state, the 'state affect' refers to the attraction that people feel towards the state, as the object of political protest, action or reference. The state, in its projection as a sovereign body, they contend, is perceived to contain promises. Sovereignty simultaneously contains the promise of violence and of security, stability and in the case of the modern state, progress. Krupta and Nugent (2015, 14–15) argue that this facet of the state can be addressed using Lauren Berlant's conception of an 'object of desire', as a 'cluster of promises'. For Berlant (2006, 20, original emphasis), 'our sense of *our endurance in the object*' is explained by our perception that 'proximity to the object means proximity to the cluster of things that the object promises'. Thus, actors position themselves 'close' to the state in a political sense through development programs or social movements that clash with the state in order to gain access to the promises that the capitalist state embodies. By doing so, people are bound to the state in its fetishised form through 'promise and expectation, disillusion and alienation', adding to the legitimacy of the state as a unified, centralised sovereign (Krupta and Nugent 2015, 15).

Third Heuristic Device: Profanity versus Sublimity

The last heuristic device able to help us examine state formation is Ernst Kantorowicz's formulation of the sovereign as two bodies. Kantorowicz (1957) argues that the king (or prince) has a profane side containing his 'mortal body'; and another sublime containing the eternal 'body politic'. Fernando Coronil argues that this theological form has been displaced in the Venezuelan case by the duality of 'secular leaders [and]… the nation's natural body' (Coronil 1997, 113); the 'nation's vanishing

physical body opposed to 'the nation's eternal political body' (Coronil 1997, 111). Thomas Blom Hansen (2001, 225) has also developed this perspective, arguing the state is characterised by this unification of the profane and sublime. On the one hand the state is uneven and incoherent, unable to exert itself over the whole of its terrain, functioning through a logic of corruption and corporatism that is constantly shaping and reshaping people's relationships with the state. It is brutal, and at times openly aggressive towards its citizens.[25] This is the state's authoritarian face, 'a more naked representation of [its] sovereign power' (Hansen and Stepputat 2005, 23). On the other hand, the state is sublime, a labyrinth of state secrets, technical knowledge and practices of apparent prestidigitation, secrets kept from all but a small section of society. It is the unity of these two sides that maintains the state and its legitimacy, and so the understanding of these two opposites is in principle essential for a complete understanding of the state.

Whilst the Venezuelan case is distinct from the Bolivian case, the 'natural' body of the nation has been vital to Bolivia's development, first as the source of mineral wealth and most recently through hydrocarbon extraction. The idea of sacrificing the natural body for the good of the eternal nation is central to the political project of the MAS, whose political economic base is the exploitation of hydrocarbons to pay for moderate redistributive programs. This opposition between the non-renewable, limited, profane natural body of Bolivia and the sublime political project of the nation is never clearer than in the government's central project of the process of change [*proceso de cambio*], a label for its modernising project, and an often used justification for the degradation of Mother Earth [*pachamama*] for the good of the Bolivian people. In the face of recent socio-ecological conflicts the government has argued for the 'necessary' sacrifice of the natural body of the nation to sustain and propel forward the political project of the Bolivian people.

Together, these three heuristic devices provide the theoretical toolbox to unpick the processes of state formation in passive revolution. They offer a multidimensional perspective that helps connect political economy (particularly extractivism), the importance of Evo Morales as a leader and state-social movement relations at different moments throughout the thesis.

[25] On the violent origins of the state, see also Benjamin 1986[1921].

Theorising Class

Scholars studying informalised labour in the global south (e.g., Chatterjee 2016, Selwyn 2014) and new articulations of class in urbanised contexts (e.g., Harvey 2012, Webber 2011b) have found E.P. Thompson's dialectical formulation of class as *processual* and *relational* a productive definition to work with.[26] Writing against the structuralism of Althusser that was so pervasive in Marxist circles during the 1960s, Thompson argued that economic processes and relations—and resistance to these processes and relations—produce the particular 'values, norms and cultural forms' of different historical moments (Wood 1995, 62). These are produced by confrontations between the logic of capitalist relations and what E.P. Thompson (1978, 155) called the 'moral economy' of the subaltern classes. 'What interest[ed] Thompson', argues Ellen Meiskins Wood (1995, 62), 'is the relations and processes in which production relations… shape or exert pressure upon all aspects of social life at once and all the time'.

For Thompson, class is an active process, as otin pposed to a particular structural position within capitalism or set of characteristics. 'Classes do not exist as separate entities', stresses Thompson (1978, 149), 'look around, find an enemy class, and then start to struggle'. Rather, class is something that is constantly being formed and reformed as individuals pass through history:

> Class happens when some [people], as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other [people] whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to theirs)… Class is defined by [people] as they live their own history (Thompson 1963, 9–11).

For Thompson, it is not that structural aspects of the production process are unimportant, but rather that those structural aspects shape rather than determine class as a lived experience. There is no simple equation of class and class consciousness, which

> are always the last, not the first, stage in the real historical process… Class eventuates as men and women live their productive relations, and as they experience their determinate

[26] This description of Thompson dialectical method is taken from Ellen Meiskins Wood (1995, 13).

> situations, within “the ensemble of the social relations”, with their inherited culture and expectations, and as they handle these experiences in cultural ways. So that, in the end, no model can give us what ought to be the 'true' class formation for a certain “stage” of process (Thompson, 1978, 150).

The specific historic-geographical moments of conflict become visible through historical events Thompson calls ‘class struggle’. The articulation of these events at different times and places, especially in relation to the production process, matters, not for structural reasons but because of the particular configurations of social relations found there (Harvey 1996, 363). Class without class-consciousness is an incomplete existence of class, a mode of being to be superseded in a search for a ‘more complete and truthful form’ (McNally 2015, 141). This approach historicises class and class-consciousness, placing the social effects of economic relations at the centre of analysis. It allows investigation into how and why places within the economy where workers have structural power are transformed into associative power (Selwyn 2014, 101), and how and why ‘working classes are moving toward or away from their “truth” as revolutionary social movements’ (McNally 2015, 141). Certain industries are more important to capital accumulation where strike action has a great effect. However, this structural power is not necessarily transformed into effective associational power and used by the labour movement to influence the dynamics of capital accumulation. This associational power is influenced by several other interconnected considerations. Class alliances, as historian Greg Gandin (2005, 193) highlights, are vital in moments of struggle. Pre-existing organisational structures—what Webber (2011b, 19) labels 'infrastructure of class struggle’—also play a vital role as ‘incubator[s] of… common experience’. These infrastructures of class struggle stand on the field of civil society, and include ‘all those formal and informal networks—in the workplace, community, household, land and territory—that orientate, organise, politicise, and mobilise… class struggle’ (Webber 2011b, 19). They are the particular historical and geographical form that class struggle assumes and how, at different points in time, the working-classes mobilise.

Urban Working-Classes in Bolivia

I have chosen to use urban 'working-classes' in the plural to capture the multitude of different ways that people's labour has been commodified in the Bolivian context. The term 'working classes' as used in this thesis denotes people who do not control the key productive resources of a society and thus are either directly or indirectly dependent on the sale of labour power for their daily reproduction (Sears 2014, 4, Selwyn 2016, 1036).[27] It captures the variable experiences of working-class people. 'Working-class families, and even individual workers in many Third-World countries', contends Webber (2011b, 19), 'may hold different jobs simultaneously, or may be both urban and rural, with back and forth movement between the two worlds'. Moreover, intra-class stratification between different informalised groups is leading to the increased exploitation and pauperisation of many at the hands of a few, processes hidden by exclusively sociological or structural class definitions (Breman 2015, 70). The working classes include not just those who enter the workplace but the swathes of unemployed who were and will again be wage-earners and those who appear self-employed but who are, in fact, disguised wage labourers earning just enough to sustain themselves. Many working-class people are hidden wage-labourers, on the surface self-employed but actually tied to continued work in the popular economy by the need to reproduce themselves and their families and/or debt bondage for the goods they sell, effectively paid a piecemeal wage (see Breman 2013). The working classes are marked by 'extensive and complicated "grey areas", replete with transitional locations between the "free" wage laborers and slaves, the self-employed and the lumpenproletarians' (van der Linden 2008, 32, see also Gordon 2018).

However, the capitalist production process not only generates commodities but also the conditions within which classes form (Lebowitz 2003). Classes are not formed mechanically through the structural conditions of the production process. The working-classes also include those whose survival is indirectly dependent on wage labour—family dependants, (mostly) women and children—who provide the conditions for production through unpaid tasks that reproduce wage labour on a daily and generational basis (Camfield 2011, 1–2). Thus it is not enough to theorise class through production processes. We must also consider the *social reproduction* of the capitalist system as a whole (Bhattacharya 2017). One of the critiques laid against

[27] This has also been captured by Henry Bernstein's (2007) concept of 'classes of labour'.

Thompson is that he was 'insufficiently attentive to the specific experiences of black and women workers in the making of the working class in England, and of the distortions this introduces into his reconstruction of working-class self-making' (McNally 2015, 141). Class must be conceived as '*internally* related to sexuality, gender and race, and therefore constituted in and through these relations' (McNally 2015, 143, original emphasis). It follows as a corollary that class formation is impossible to understand without also including the dynamics of race and gender within society too.

Indigeneity and Ethnicity in Bolivia

Ethnicity and indigeneity are key components of the political dynamics within Bolivia. Part of the power of indigeneity—both for social movements and for the MAS government—is the concept's inherent flexibility. Here I follow anthropologist Andrew Canessa's (2012b, 208) understanding of indigeneity as a loose analytical concept, defined by 'the enduring power relations that arise out of [a particular] moment in history'. It 'is a relation, not a thing, and, consequently, a terrain of struggle', and thus the source of contestation and control (Sawyer 2004, 221).

'Indigenous' is used here to refer not to the everyday lives of the people of particular indigenous groups (Aymara, Quechua, Guarani, etc.) but to the politics of indigenous movements and, later, their expressions within the state. This helps avoid assumptions about indigenous communities as inherently a 'collective counterpublic… an activist community of indigenous peoples' (Stephenson 2002, 101) and to problematise the processes involved in constructing the indigeneity of social and political movements. The relationship between ethnicity, indigeneity and class in Bolivia is not a straight-forward one, and the key is to analyse *how* and *why* these three categories articulate and are articulated by one another (Webber 2011b 23).

The ethnic composition of Bolivia is contested, and there is a stark difference between the data on indigenous self-identification in the 2001 census and in the 2012 census, mainly because of methodological differences between the two censuses. In 2001, 62 percent of Bolivians self-identified as indigenous, with Aymara and Quechua groups from the western highlands representing the grand majority of indigenous people, as table 1.1 shows:

Table 1.1: Indigenous Self-Identification Aged 15+ 2001

Department	Total Aged 15+	Total Indigenous 15+	% indigenous
Beni	202,169	66,217	32.75
Chuquisaca	308,386	202,204	65.57
Cochabamba	900,020	669,261	74.36
La Paz	1,501,970	1,163,418	77.46
Oruro	250,983	185,474	73.90
Pando	30,418	4,939	16.24
Potosí	414,838	347,847	83.85
Santa Cruz	1,216,658	456,102	37.49
Tarija	239,550	47,175	19.69
Total/Average	5,064,992	3,142,637	62.05

Source: Van Cott 2005 cited in Webber 2011b, 23

Table 1.2: Indigenous Self Identification 2012

Department	Total	Total Indigenous	% indigenous
Beni	422,008	135,518	32.11
Chuquisaca	581,347	290,332	49.94
Cochabamba	1,762,761	837,993	47.54
La Paz	2,719,344	1,483,489	54.55
Oruro	494.587	252,934	51.14
Pando	110,436	26,655	24.14
Potosí	828,093	572,755	69.17
Santa Cruz	2,657,762	529,659	19.93

Tarija	483,518	70,642	14.61
Total/Average	10,059,856	4,199,977	41.75

Source: Adapted from INE 2012a

As table 1.2 demonstrates, the number of Bolivians who self-identified as indigenous, however, dropped dramatically in the 2012 census, with only 42 percent of Bolivians self-identifying as the state's indigenous category, Indígena Originaria Campesina (Indigenous Originary Peasant, IOC). Given that in the 2012 census 58 percent of Bolivians did not self-identify as indigenous, Solíz Rada (2013) and Mesa Gilbert (2013) argued that Bolivia was *mestizo* (mixed indigenous-Spanish descent, a category removed from the census) rather than plurinational. However, Xavier Albó (2013) contends that the imposed nature of the IOC as a category was a determining factor. People who identify as a particular indigenous group would not necessarily self-identify as IOC. Indeed, the Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (National Institute of Statistics, INE), the body responsible for the census, notes that the summation of the figures for the self-identification with different indigenous nations and peoples would not give the number who self-identified as IOC in 2012 (INE 2012b). Moreover, whereas the 2001 census only captured those aged 15 and over, the 2012 census was all ages, leading to a further difficulty in comparing the data of the two censuses. As we shall see, who considers themselves to be indigenous or not has been important over the past decade under the Morales government.

Final Remarks

The goal of this chapter was to underscore the theoretical shortcomings of studying Latin American social reality using social movement theory or mainstream approaches to the city. Political ethnography offers a way to better understand quotidian political life in Latin America, however it needs the corrective of adding class and political economy into the analysis. I have argued that an effective way to do this in order to address the Pink Tide is through the Gramscian frame of passive revolution, which simultaneously offers a way to understand the shifting the political economy of the region, as well as its class dynamics, processes of state formation and morphing state-society relations. As a way to counter a tendency towards state-centricity present in some uses of passive revolution, I have introduced three theoretical pivots—class,

space and state—to better unpick the recent dynamics of Latin America. Space is an integral, if often forgotten, part of passive revolution, as I demonstrated above, since passive revolution resolves political crisis *through* space. I argue that the heuristic devices of the state effect, the state affect and the profane-sublime dialectic reveal how dynamics of state formation play out—and continue to play out—in moments of passive revolution. I have complemented this approach to the state with Thompson's experiential definition of class. Together these three theoretical lenses give analytical content to the passive revolution frame. But before focusing on analysis of Bolivia's particular experience of the Pink Tide, we must turn briefly first to that country's historical processes of state formation, class formation and the production of space which bore its conjuncture.

Chapter 2

Making a Nation: The Class and Spatial Composition of the National Revolutionary State (1952–1985)

In 1952 Bolivia underwent a national-popular revolution that swept aside the old oligarchic economic order and constructed the Bolivian state through an alliance of middle-class urbanites and the working-classes. Since 1952 Bolivia has experienced waves of nationalisation and privatisation, and the formation of new economic sectors, galvanising processes of class formation and producing new class alliances. The military was dismantled and later rebuilt; the largely indigenous peasantry entered the state and the workers exerted considerable political power thanks to agrarian reform and the creation of the Central Obrera Boliviana (Bolivian Workers' Central, COB) respectively. Unfortunately, the revolutionary fervour of 1952 did not manage to sustain itself for very long. External pressures exerted by the vicissitudes of the global tin-market and the US government, and internal class contradictions within the state itself, derailed the national-popular project almost as soon as it had begun.

Military dictatorships dominated the political terrain of Bolivia from 1964 to 1982. This was a time when the peasantry, integrated into the national-popular project through political patronage and clientelist networks, made and later broke a pact with the military, paving the way for new political projects centred on Bolivia's indigenous population. Simultaneously, preferential treatment of the nascent agribusiness bourgeoisie, coupled with high commodity prices after the first oil shock of 1973, saw the economic epicentre of Bolivia shift away from the highland mining districts to the eastern lowlands. Sections of the lowland bourgeoisie were perfectly placed to exploit the massive profits offered by the growing cocaine industry. With the cotton crash of 1975 and subsequent debt crisis of the 1980s, coca cultivation increasingly became a livelihood strategy for many poor Bolivians, helping Bolivians mediate the worst of the economic crises that racked the country during the 1980s.

This chapter is divided into three phases: (1) the national revolutionary period (1952–1964); (2) the military dictatorships (1964–1978); and (3) the return to democracy (1978–1985). Its focus is the production of space during the state of 1952, encompassing state formation, changing dynamics of capital accumulation and the emergence of new classes. The National Revolutionary State form would stay intact

until neoliberalism, although its working-class pole became increasingly marginalised and subject to state violence. Although initially co-opted by the state through the military-peasant pact, indigenous communities later became important social actors in the struggles during the return to democracy after their corporatist relationships with the state broke down. Urbanisation transformed the axes of accumulation during this time as La Paz–Cochabamba–Santa Cruz became the central pivot within the country. The eastern bourgeoisie would be fomented during this time as the department of Santa Cruz became the country's economic centre thanks to the declining importance of tin-mining and the rise of hydrocarbons and agro-industry.

The National Revolutionary Period 1952–1964

On 9 April 1952 the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (National Revolutionary Movement, MNR) led a surprisingly bloodless revolution (Dunkerley 1984, 39). Bolivia's National Revolution was a truly popular moment characterised by broad alliances of subaltern classes, as a coalition of miners, factory-workers, MNR supporters and urban citizens overran the old regime and its military, persuading many low-ranked soldiers to switch sides and forcing the remnants of the military into exile, temporarily sweeping the military apparatus away (Dunkerley 1984, 40, Hylton and Thomson 2007, 77). Meanwhile, the peasantry was slowly mobilised and began to occupy the old *haciendas* and demand agrarian reform (Hylton and Thomson 2007, 78).[28]

The modern forms of the state, nation and society emerged through the crossing (not replacement) of national sentiment and class sentiment (Zavaleta, 2009[1978]: 156). The working class movement in Bolivia was intimately tied to the project of nation building and the state form of the National Revolution of 1952, forming one side of the National Revolutionary State. Rural indigenous peasant communities were integrated into the state through agrarian, educational and electoral reforms. This helped the Bolivian state and ideas of Bolivian nationhood spread more widely across its territory than ever before. Urbanisation and the breaking of rural areas into small agricultural parcels in the highlands transformed the spaces of the peasantry and the working-classes, whilst the consolidation of agricultural enterprises in the eastern

[28] *Haciendas* are large agricultural holdings that were established during the colonial period across Latin America.

lowlands left the land-owning elite intact. This post-revolution government attempted to foster this elite into a national bourgeoisie whilst concurrently curtailing the more radical sectors of the working-classes under the watchful eyes of the US.

The period following the National Revolution was one of consolidation, as the MNR struggled to contain the social forces unleashed by the revolution and ensure that the old oligarchy could not regroup and launch a counterinsurgent movement. During the first four years of MNR rule (1952–1956) the government tried to implement a development plan that would appease the popular classes that had been so central to the revolution. There were three central tenets to this plan: (1) tin nationalisation; (2) agrarian reform; and (3) universal suffrage (Gotkowitz 2007, 287).

Nationalisation of the Mines and the Formation of the COB

The period before the National Revolution was plagued by inflation, unemployment and resource scarcity (Malloy 1970, 155). The MNR inherited a bankrupt government and an economy dependent on an industry (tin-mining) in decline.[29] Memories of the failure of the co-government with Major Gualberto Villarroel (1943–1946) were still fresh in the mind of many *MNRistas* (Whitehead 2003, 31), who believed that a decisive break with the power of the old oligarchy—especially the *rosca* of tin barons Simón Patiño, Guillermo Aramayo and Mauricio Hochchild—was essential if a nascent bourgeoisie was going to develop into a central historical actor and maintain the revolution (Zavaleta 2009[1978], 154). The MNR were quick to design a package of reforms that were fairly radical in nature, driven by the pressure of social forces that had built up in the period after the Chaco War (1932–1935).

The day after new-MNR president Víctor Paz Estenssoro assumed office the COB was founded, formed from the synthesis of the different organisational experiences and collective action accumulated during the revolution (García Linera *et al.* 2004, 37). The creation of the COB was part of an attempt to integrate the labour movement into the party structures of the MNR. This afforded the COB significant influence within the party, and it was quick to organise marches and strikes demanding nationalisation of key industries, something that was at odds with the economic principles of many at the MNR's core (Mayorga 1978, 97). On 2 October 1952 the

[29] By 1950 the largest outlay of state expenditure was servicing Bolivia's foreign debt (Malloy 1970, 155).

state-owned mining company COMIBOL was created, paving the way for the nationalisation of the country's largest tin mines (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 2, Malloy 1970, 175). The nationalisation decree, signed on 31 October, transferred the assets of the *rosca* to the state, a total of 13 companies owning 163 mines, producing 27,000 metric tonnes of tin and employing 29,000 people (Dunkerley 1984, 58). Resource nationalism—the idea that Bolivia's resources should be used by the state for the country's economic development and social welfare—was salient in drawing together the broad coalition of forces headed by the MNR (Young 2017, 2). However, the acquisition of the productive capacity of three-quarters of Bolivia's tin mines came at a heavy price, with the government forced to pay the tin barons compensation of more than two-thirds of Bolivia's foreign exchange reserves, a total of US$27 million (Dunkerley 1984, 58).

Rural Revolt and Agrarian Reform

The second central tenet of the state of 1952 was agrarian reform, introduced on 2 August 1953 (Hylton and Thomson 2007, 79). Staring with the violent end of the populist regime of Villaroel-MNR in 1946, the period prior to 1952 was one marked by a cycle of indigenous rebellion and revolutionary fervour (Gotkowitz 2007, 6). As historian Laura Gotkowitz (2007, 274–75) underscores, the often-forgotten rural indigenous struggles across Aymara and Quechua speaking communities in the highlands were vital dynamics of the revolution, with the 1945 Indigenous Congress and the rebellions of 1946–1947 profoundly marking the events of 1952. 'When the MNR's urban revolution triumphed in 1952', contends Gotkowitz (2007, 276), 'another revolution, a rural revolution, was already unfolding'.

By the end of 1952 the rural indigenous population began to 'take into their hands the start of an agrarian redistribution whose influence radiated rapidly' (Dandler 1969, 113, cited in Rivera 2003[1983], 122). Through the departments of La Paz, Oruro, Cochabamba and parts of Potosí and Chuquisaca, rural labourers and landless peasants rose up and seized *haciendas*, distributing land amongst themselves (Hylton and Thomson 2007, 79). This represented a massive threat to the MNR government, who were at a critical conjuncture in the consolidation of state power (Eckstein 1979, 461, Rivera 2003[1983], 123). By mid-1953, it was clear that the MNR had to act, and the government promulgated a radical redistribution of land, legalising the prior land

seizures and shifting the balance of power in the western highlands and valleys from the landowners to the previously landless peasants (Albó 1987, 383, Hylton and Thomson 2007, 79).

Agrarian reform allowed rural indigenous people, now freed from bonded labour on the *haciendas*, to enter the city of La Paz for the first time and occupy marginal spaces (Arbona and Kohl 2004, 258). It also formed El Alto as an urban space, as the five or six *haciendas* that had occupied the land on the edge of the bowl containing La Paz were broken up (Lazar 2008, 46). Although land reform abolished *haciendas* in many parts of the country, its implementation was extremely cumbersome (Carter 1971, 244–48) and it did not reorganise peasant production or tackle the inequality of landholdings, with many benefactors of the reform receiving 'little more than small parcels previously held in usufruct' (Gill 1987, 32). Often the parcels were too small to sustain a family and the first big wave of migration to La Paz and El Alto from rural areas occurred because of drought and famine on the *altiplano* (highlands) following agrarian reform (Lazar 2008, 47). During this first wave of migration ex-peons (agricultural bonded labourers) settled around the railway in the neighbourhoods close to La Ceja in El Alto (what are now districts one and six), and engaged with commercial activities. These changes increased the population of El Alto from 11,000 in 1950 to around 30,000 in 1960 (CODEPO 2005, 14).

The agrarian reform also had a profound impact on state-society relations. As the MNR attempted to win over a peasantry it assumed to be homogenous, peasant unions became the only official channels of contact between the state and the peasantry, leading to clientelism, self-interest and intra-group stratification within rural communities (Albó 1987, 383–84). Moreover, the creation of peasant unions drew on the syndicalism of the Left creating two power structures within the rural population—the MNR-sponsored peasant unions and the traditional Aymara *ayllus*[30]—both vying for power and legitimacy.

There was a second face to agrarian reform designed to encourage agrarian capitalism (Soruco 2008, 61), which had a large influence on the emergence of Santa

[30] An *ayllu* is a socio-economic and socio-political unit, where people have a shared communal identity and work together towards common goals (Choque and Mamani 2003, 158). The community is not just a collective identity but is brought together by symbolic beliefs and practices (Rasnake 1988, 170). It is also comprised of humans and non-humans (Langer 1990, 243–44, de la Cadena 2015, 12). See Platt (2016[1982]) and Poweska (2013, 84–90) for discussions on the *ayllu*.

Cruz as an economic centre. The creation of a new legal category—agricultural enterprise—prevented land redistribution in cases where landowners were willing to invest capital, meaning that the country's east was left virtually untouched by land redistribution, maintaining composition of the *cruceño* (people from Santa Cruz) elite (Gill 1987, 32, Klein 2003, 236). The 1952 revolution did, however, transform how landholdings were used. US Agency for International Development (USAID) agricultural loans, distributed by the Banco Agrario Boliviano (Bolivian Agricultural Bank, BAB), investment in roads, production techniques and technology, coupled with the migration of freed surplus labour from the western part of the country, repositioned Santa Cruz as a capitalist agricultural production centre of national importance (Eckstein 1983, 108—10, Sanabria 1993, 50, Soruco 2008, 38—39).[31] The result was the consolidation of capitalist large-scale agricultural units in the country's east and the division of the *altiplano* (highlands) into tiny parcels of land. By 1967 59 percent of families owned less than 5 hectares, whilst new ranches in the lowlands averaged around 8,000 hectares in size (Eckstein 1983, 109).

Mestizaje and the Creation of the Nation

The third facet of the 1952-state was universal suffrage and the extension of education, especially in rural areas. The MNR removed literacy as a precondition for voting as one of its first acts, enfranchising the indigenous peasant masses and urban working-classes in one swift move, increasing the size of the electorate from 200,000 (6.6 percent of the population) to almost a million voters (33.8 percent of the population) (Dunkerley 1984, 50, Klein 2003, 236). After years of indigenous communities demanding better education, the official rate of illiteracy still hovered around 70 percent in 1955 (although the estimated figure for the indigenous population was significantly higher at 85 percent) (Larson 2003, 185). Previous educational projects had been underfunded and had barely dented the dearth of educational attainment among the rural indigenous population (Larson 2003, 202).[32]

[31] The MNR actively encouraged the migration of *colonizadores* (colonisers) from the *altiplano* and *cochabambino* valleys to tackle the historic labour shortage in lowland agriculture (Carter 1971, 259–62).

[32] Klein notes that illiteracy had dropped to 33 percent by 1976 and was 14 percent by the year 2000. However, these improvements were larger among the male population than the female one (Klein 2003, 248).

Educational reform increased the number of enrolled students in rural areas by 546 percent over the twenty-year period after the revolution (Albó 1983, 6). However, this came at a cost.[33] A central feature of the *National* Revolution was the nation. The MNR attempted to build national unity over its territory under the hegemonic *mestizaje* identity. The *mestizaje* project 'implied a distillation of Bolivia's distinct Spanish and Indian racial and civilisational essences into a blended national unity' (Hylton and Thomson 2007, 80), a process whereby indigenous cultures and practices were westernised. The MNR attempted to transform the indigenous population into Spanish-speaking *mestizo* citizens and consumers integrated into the dominant culture of Bolivian society (Healy and Paulson 2000, 7, Rivera 2004, 21). *Mestizaje* relegated 'any indigenous future', argues anthropologist Robert Albro (2006, 392), 'to assimilation into a desirable culturally and ethnically mixed middle class'. Class and ethnic cleavages were conciliated through this national project as the MNR sought to realise the as-of-yet unfulfilled promises of Bolivia's 1825 independence. To these ends, the MNR co-opted indigenous leaders through peasant unions, transforming the leadership and radical organisation so vital in the anti-oligarchic struggles of the 1940s into bastions of support for the national revolution (Rivera 2003[1983], 149). Interestingly, this was not entirely a top-down process (Sanjinés 2014, 14—15), and *Quechua* groups in the Cochabamba valleys formed the backbone of the national-popular project through what Silvia Rivera (2003[1983], 164) calls 'active subordination'. This project of *mestizaje*—or the attempt at it—was one of the most important legacies of the National Revolution, and its breakdown, through the end of the Pacto Militar-Campesino (Peasant-Military Pact PMC) and the rise of *katarismo*, had immense ramifications for Bolivia's historical trajectory (Webber 2011b, 67).

The Contradictions of the National Revolutionary State

The economic programme of the MNR was developmental, trying to provoke economic growth through government-led initiatives in the private sector and ISI (Eckstein and Hagopian 1983, 66).[34] The geopolitical climate of the Cold War meant

[33] See Larson (2003, 191–203) for a detailed account of cultural assimilation and education in the pre-1952 context.

[34] Susan Eckstein, Eduardo Gamarra, Forest Hylton, Alan Knight, James Malloy, Sinclair Thomson and Lawrence Whitehead all note the similarities between the consolidation of the Mexican revolution by the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary

that the MNR government was quick to distance itself from Moscow; in fact, it was decidedly anti-communist (Young 2017, 37).[35] The global tin price was particularly susceptible to fluctuations in US demand, leaving Bolivia at a distinct disadvantage in their relationship with the US (Grindle 2003a, 10, Dunkerley 2003, 154–55).[36] The nationalisation of the mines was, therefore, an isolated incident. The rest of the economy was insulated from radical transformation or structural reform (Malloy 1970, 176), and the government was careful to pay adequate compensation for nationalisation under the watchful eye of the US (Alexander 1958, 103, Dunkerley 1984, 58, Malloy 1970, 176).

The underlying tensions at the heart of the state of 1952 would become increasingly visible, as the multi-class alliance struggled to deliver on political promises in the face of scarce resources (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 4, Knight 2003, 71). The cost of living index rose from 100 in 1952 to 2,270 by the end of 1956 and foreign reserves were reduced to a measly US$1.2 million (Dunkerley 1984, 86).[37] By 1956, the administration of Siles (1956–1960) had experienced what James Malloy (1970, 246) labels a 'deflation of national power', as the national revolution, destroyed and dispersed state power among many different groups. The MNR itself was split into factions, and the radicalism of the COB was starting to cause friction within the party (Whitehead 2003, 34). US aid was used to promote private sector interests in the country on the condition that radical sectors were purged from the MNR (Young 2011, 8). The MNR faced challenges outside of its epicentre of power in La Paz, especially from the growing strength of the agricultural elite of Santa Cruz (Whitehead 2003, 34), who rallied around the newly formed Comité Pro-Santa Cruz (Pro-Santa Cruz Committee, CPSC) to contest the allocation of oil revenue produced in the department (Gill 1987, 44, Sivak 2007, 18). Part of the problem was that the internal diversity of Bolivian society meant that the reforms and the cultural assimilation project of

Party) from 1929 onwards and Bolivia's National Revolution by the MNR. See Eckstein 1979, 460, Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 1, Knight 2003, Hylton and Thomson 2007, 77, Whitehead 2003, 38.

[35] As Whitehead (2003, 27) notes, the National Revolution occurred at the height of the Korean War and during the emergence of McCarthyism, in the same period when the Mossadeq government in Iran and Arbenz regime in Guatemala were toppled and military dictatorships controlled Colombia, Peru and Venezuela.

[36] The US used their tin reserves to burst a speculation bubble during the Korean War (1950–53), causing the global tin-price to plummet (Lehman 2003, 98).

[37] Mayorga points to the failure of the state to foster a metallurgical industry to process mineral ore as a major constraint of Bolivia's accumulation of foreign earnings (Mayorga, 1978, 99).

mestizaje were nigh on impossible. Moreover, the external pressures—Bolivia's patron-client relationship with the United States and the vicissitudes of the global mineral markets—gave the state little control over an economy dependent on the export of one primary commodity, severely limiting policy options and outcomes.

Thus, in 1956 the revolution lurched rightwards as Siles introduced the stabilisation plan with the support of the IMF and the US state (Webber 2011b, 69). The ISI model that followed immediately after the revolution was ended through a wage-freeze, banking restrictions and the end of subsidies, tariff protection, and dual exchange rates (Eckstein and Hagopian 1983, 72–77). The stabilisation programme did reduce inflation and capital flight, but it was paid for by the working-classes, who suffered rising unemployment and a decline in real wages (Webber 2011b, 69). The financial and agribusiness elite, however, benefitted nicely from this political economic shift, with millions of US dollars being provided for the clearance of jungle, infrastructure and cheap credit to develop capitalised agriculture in Bolivia's eastern lowlands (Eckstein 1979, 461, Gill 1987, 37–38). The paved road between Cochabamba and Santa Cruz (completed in 1954 and paved in 1956) increased traffic tenfold in a decade (Castro Bozo 2013, 173–74), connecting Santa Cruz with the rest of the country, a pivotal moment in the establishment of the isolated lowland city as an economic hub (Healy and Paulson 2000, 7). The inauguration of the railway lines between Santa Cruz and Corumbá (Brazil) in 1955 and Santa Cruz and Yacuiba (Argentina) in 1957 were also vital for connecting the region (and its hydrocarbon fields) with its neighbours' large internal markets (Castro Bozo 2013, 177–86).[38] These projects were part of a larger policy drive known as the 'March to the East', which sought to diversify Bolivia's economy and make Bolivia less dependent on agricultural imports through integrating the eastern lowlands into the national economy and implementing the suggestions of the US-produced 'Bohan plan' (1942) (Kirshner 2013, 545, Moore 1990, 33, Sanabria 1993, 50–52).[39] The Triangular Plan of 1961 signalled a continuation of this development pathway, and the financial assistance offered to

[38] Construction on both railways were started in the 1940s and although inaugurated in the 1950s, the building of bridges and further infrastructure continued well into the 1970s (Castro Bozo 2013, 177–86).

[39] The MNR itself did not have a definite economic strategy and relied on the Bohan Plan for its 'grand strategy' (Thorn 1971, 165). The recommendations of the Bohan Plan included: 'first, simulate tropical agricultural products such as sugar, cotton, cattle, lumber and the export potential of rubber and quinine. Second, construct a highway network linking production centres with consumption centres' (Gill 1987, 37).

the growing capitalist class of eastern Bolivia—and in particular Santa Cruz—paved the way for a dramatic shift in power and enabled Santa Cruz to later become the epicentre of capital accumulation in Bolivia (Gill 1987, 47).

The class content of these reforms did not go unnoticed, and tensions between the COB and the MNR escalated in the period after 1956, with the Federación Sindical de los Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia (Trade-Union Federation of Bolivian Mine Workers, FSTMB), galvanised by the Trotskyist Partido Obrero Revolucionario (Revolutionary Workers' Party, POR), calling for the end of the *cogobierno* (Webber 2011b, 69—72). The Triangular Plan was funded by the United States, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the German government, and had primarily political aims: to stabilise Paz Estenssoro's government and prevent left-wing groups taking power (Young 2011, 10—11). When the 1961 Triangular Plan announced the restructuring of COMIBOL—which by then had debts of US$20 million—it marked the beginning of a rupture between the COB and the MNR.[40] Part of this restructuring was a closure of a number of mines, stricter labour-discipline and the dismissal of one-fifth of the workforce (Dunkerley 1984, 105, Young 2011, 14). This was strongly resisted, and only 2,000 out of the 5,000 layoffs were achieved in the two years following the announcement of the plan. Eventually a lock down was imposed on the Siglo XX mine in an attempt to force through the restructuring, and in retaliation the miners went out on one of the longest strikes in their history (Dunkerley 1984, 111). Although it was not enough to prevent the Triangular Plan being pushed through, the end result was splits between the workers and the MNR, and within the MNR itself (Webber 2011b, 69).

Military Dictatorships 1964–1978

The military coup d'état of the 4 November 1964 brought air force chief René Barrientos to power, the rapport he had built among the peasantry during the first years of the PMC proving a decisive factor (Hylton and Thomson 2007, 84).[41] Under Barrientos the military was re-imagined as an organisation and transformed from a

[40] The comprehensive study of COMIBOL by economist Melvin Burke (1987, 2) found that COMIBOL's debts were, in part, a product of deceptive accounting designed to undermine labour. See Nash (1993) for an account of the miner's perception of COMIBOL's failure.
[41] Barrientos was a Quechua speaker who built strong corporatist relations with peasant leaders.

deployable armed force to a quasi-political party, with officers occupying important managerial posts in a wide-ranging number of institutions (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 21, 43). The fourteen years of military dictatorships that followed reorientated capital accumulation in the country towards agricultural and hydrocarbon exports from the eastern part of the country, fomenting the incipient lowland bourgeoisie. Santa Cruz was further integrated with the rest of the country and the agricultural frontier advanced into the Amazon, whilst simultaneously processes of urbanisation in the three axes cities of La Paz-El Alto, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz were accelerated. This was a time of violent oppression against the working-classes, which culminated in subaltern struggles by indigenous communities allied with the Bolivian labour movement.

René Barrientos and the Pacto Militar-Campesino

Barrientos sought legitimacy through constitutional means, and in 1966 he won presidential elections with the Frente de la Revolución Boliviana (the Front of the Bolivian Revolution, the FRB), running on a ticket of 'revolution restored': this stressed the military component of the National Revolution and attempted to widen the social base of the state from the urban middle classes to include other important groups, including the peasantry (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 24). Barrientos extended the patrimonial relationship of dominance over the peasantry forged during the MNR government (Albó 1987, 386). However, despite his best efforts, Barrientos neither managed to unite the military nor entirely win over the peasantry. Barrientos' relationship with the peasantry was still predicated upon the cultural *mestizaje* of the MNR, and Bolivia's heterogeneous social terrain limited Barrientos' attempts to pacify the peasantry and maintain the unity of the state. In parts of the Andes—particularly Potosí (Rivera 2003[1983], 134)—the relationship between the peasant syndicates and other indigenous hierarchies became frayed, and despite some sections of the working-classes viewing the peasantry as traitorous, complete subordination of the peasantry was never achieved (Hylton and Thomson 2007, 84, Rivera 2003[1983], 144). Discontent among the peasants congealed into the Bloque Campesino Independente (Independent Peasant Bloc, BCI), a small but nevertheless important development under Barrientos. When Barrientos tried to levy a new tax on the peasantry in December 1968, discontent and protest radiated from Achacachi through

the departments of La Paz and Oruro, the first signs of the contradictions underlying the PMC (Albó 1987, 388).

The political economy of Bolivia under Barrientos marked a continuation of the economic policies of the Triangular Plan. Bolivia's economy was actively opened up to foreign capital as Barrientos sought to create a favourable investment environment. The two sectors affected most by the shift towards private investment were mining and hydrocarbons. The private sector accounted for 45 percent of the mining sector by 1968 (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 15), and this increased even further with the influx of foreign banks into the mineral markets, with 58 percent of mineral deposits controlled by foreign banks by 1969 (Dunkerley 1984, 127). In the hydrocarbons sector Gulf Oil came to control around 80 percent of total production under Barrientos, compared to the 20 percent market share of Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales de Bolivia (Bolivian State Petroleum Company, YPFB) (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 16). Gulf Oil became such an economic force within Bolivia that they even provided the Bell helicopter that Barrientos used to tour the country (Dunkerley 1984, 132, Hylton and Thomson 2007, 84). However, despite increased hydrocarbon production the Bolivian state remained incapable of increasing its revenue due to extremely light tax liabilities and generous deals offered to multinational companies (Dunkerley 1984, 128). It remained dependent on foreign aid for state revenue and although the nature of foreign aid was restructured during the late—1960s, Bolivia's foreign debt increased at an alarming rate during this period (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 17). The full ramifications of the effects of Barrientos' economic policies would not become apparent until 1970s, but this period saw capital accumulation re-centred, as hydrocarbons, construction, commerce, finance and housing increased their share of the economy vis-á-vis that of agriculture and mining (Malloy and Gamarra 1988,16).

The development project of Barrientos also reconfigured space. The market and state were both quantitatively extended through this period, in part due to the patrimonial relationships fostered by Barrientos himself. This process was uneven, with the Cochabamba valley regions benefiting most and the *altiplano* region of Potosí being largely ignored, even as COMIBOL was increasingly decapitalised to finance agriculture in the east (Moore 1990, 39). Migration waves to both urban areas (La Paz, El Alto, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz) and the agricultural frontier in eastern Bolivia grew as both the shrinking size of agricultural plots distributed during agrarian reform

became increasingly evident and relocated miners laid off by COMIBOL searched for work (Albó 1987, 387, Carter 1971, 248, Stearman 1985, 32).

This was also the period when the development body in Santa Cruz, the Comité de Obras Públicas (Public Works Committee), became autonomous, funded by the 11 percent royalties on hydrocarbon exploration in the department (Stearman 1985, 35). Between 1958 and 1960, it hired Brazilian Italian firm Compañía Técnica Internacional (International Technical Company, Techint) to plan the city of Santa Cruz. Drawing on modernist visions for São Paulo, Brazil, Techint deigned a garden city radiating from the old colonial plaza 24 de Septiembre in rings (Kirshner 2013, 545—46). Commencing in 1967, the Plan Techint (as this blueprint was known) was never fully implemented, neither did it envision the massive migration that was to come. Thus, although Santa Cruz surged ahead of other Bolivian cities in urban planning terms during the early-1970s (Kirshner 2013, 546, Stearman 1985, 35), it later came to be characterised by insufficient public services and hierarchical space divided along class and ethnic lines (Urzagasti 2014b, 24).

The class content of Barrientos' economic model was clear, as the new bourgeoisie consolidated itself at the expense of popular classes. Barrientos demanded the 'spiritual and material disarming of the miners' within days of entering office (Dunkerley 1984, 122), increasingly resorting to coercion in order to push through transformations that did not benefit the popular-classes (Albó 1987, 386). The repression of the working-classes ramped up in May 1965, with the military marching into the mining camps of Colquiri, Milluni, Catavi, Siglo XX and San José provoking violent clashes between the army and the miners, leaving many dead (Nash 1993, 276, Lora 1977, 341). The COB called a general strike, but it failed to take root across all of Bolivian society and the labour movement split into factions, with only the miners and the factory workers maintaining strike action (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 11). On 1 June the COB and FSTMB were declared illegal and working-class resistance quashed (Webber 2011b, 81). Wages were cut by 40 to 50 percent, food-subsidies were removed, drastically increasing the price of basic goods and the workforce was dramatically reduced, with 1,300 workers laid off in June alone (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 11). In the following period, a number of labour-leaders were assassinated. The brutal repression of the miners reached its zenith during early in the morning on 24 June 1967 with the 'San Juan massacre', the army storming the Siglo XX-Catavi mining complex and leaving around 90 dead (Dunkerley 1984, 149, Lora 1977, 347—

48, Nash 1993, 278, Viezzar 1977, 92). Barrientos became increasingly dependent on factions within the armed forces rather than the military institution itself, and discontent led by *ex-falangista* General Juan José Torres had started to emerge as a challenge to Barrientos' power by 1968 (Dunkerley 1984, 155, Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 22). Barrientos' regime came to an abrupt end in April 1969 when he was killed in a mysterious helicopter crash, creating a power vacuum that would not be filled for a further two years (Dunkerley 1984, 156). When Torres eventually came to power in October 1970, his limited popularity within the military forced him to make a generous offer of *cogobierno* to the COB (Zavaleta 2011[1972], 469—70). The COB refused based on the experience with the MNR (Mayorga 1978, 108), but that did not prevent worker-led mass mobilisations preventing a right-wing coup attempt in January 1971. This relationship peaked on 22 June 1971 with the Asamblea Popular (Popular Assembly), where 218 delegates—123 from the labour unions, 23 from the peasantry and the rest comprised of left-wing political parties—gathered at the Bolivian congress (Webber 2011b, 85). The Popular Assembly was a historic moment of reflection for the Bolivian Left where revolutionary possibilities and conditions were discussed for 10 days (Webber 2011b, 86). Despite the hope generated from this historic congress, its effects were short-lived as Hugo Banzer swept to power on 21 August 1971, deposing the populist experiment of General Torres (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 67).

The Banzerato and the Rise of Santa Cruz

The coup in August 1971 was backed by Washington and the emergent bourgeoisie in Santa Cruz (Dunkerley 1984, 201). During the seven years of the *banzerato* Bolivia's economic and political terrain was transformed beyond recognition. Military interests were placed at the fore of Banzer's political programme, and benefits accrued in Banzer's home-department of Santa Cruz (Mayorga 1978, 110). However, the institution of the military, Malloy and Gamarra (1988, 77) contend, had become fragmented and weak, characterised by incoherence and a breakdown of the chain of command. Banzer thus consolidated power through the creation of the umbrella organisation Frente Popular Nacionalista (Nationalist-Popular Front, FPN), a coalition of the armed forces, the Falange Socialista Boliviana (Socialist Falange of Bolivia, FSB), the right-wing faction of the MNR (led by Víctor Paz Estenssoro) and the

Confederación de Empresarios Privados de Bolivia (the Confederation of Private Companies of Bolivia, CEPB), which drew support from the sections of capital based in Santa Cruz (Mayorga 1978, 110). This transformed the dominant power bloc within Bolivia, as high commodity prices, cheap credit and state subsidies consolidated the position of the mining elite and agribusiness bourgeoisie whilst simultaneously statist bourgeois groups also emerged, comprised of the high military and civilian bureaucracy who controlled state enterprises (Mayorga 1978, 110—11).

The FPN regime constructed a corporatist socioeconomic order, whilst the Chicago school led by Milton Freedman acted as economic advisers, enthusiastically liberalising Bolivia's trade protections, reducing tariffs and slashing welfare (Dunkerley 1984, 202). Washington increased its financing of Bolivia—USAID loaned Bolivia over US$60 million in Banzer's first 16 months alone—and Brazil provided credit to purchase machinery to complete the railroad between Santa Cruz and the border town of Corumbá (Dunkerley 1984, 205). However, Banzer's government was unable to develop the manufacturing sector—whose contribution to GDP continued to hover around the historic level of 15 percent in 1980 (Eckstein and Hagopian 1983, 69, García Linera 2014[1999], 219), employing around 10 percent of the economically active population (García Linera 2014[1999], 216)—and levels of foreign investment remained low, especially when compared to other countries in the region (Eckstein and Hagopian 1983 73, Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 98). Banzer's administration, for the most part, financed Bolivia's economic development through exporting oil, exploiting the historically high commodity prices during the 1970s (Eckstein and Hagopian 1983, 74), as well as through foreign bilateral loans and petrodollars that had flooded the global market after the 1973 oil shock (Kohl and Farthing 2006, 53). This short-run commodities boom and the abundance of US foreign aid galvanised a wealth of speculative activities, including construction. The construction boom during the *banzerato* saw Santa Cruz extend outwards beyond the four rings of the Plan Techint, La Paz shoot upwards, especially in the trendy neighbourhoods of Zona Sur (south La Paz), and *campesinos* (peasants) from the small agricultural parcels of the *altiplano* drawn to El Alto and city life (Dunkerley 1984, 227, Lazar 2008, 48). Falling oil prices and reserves, a rising fiscal deficit and enormous foreign debt meant that by 1978 Bolivia owed US$2.5 billion, almost the value of their entire GDP (Eckstein and Hagopian 1983, 74, Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 101).

An important facet of Banzer's premiership was the formation of new classes and the production of new spaces of accumulation. The higher commodity prices due to 1973 oil shock also made the production of non-traditional export crops and the husbandry of cattle in Bolivia's eastern lowland an inviting prospect (Gill 1987, 51).[42] This galvanised the proliferation of cultivation of export crops—including sugar, cotton, rice and coffee—whilst the increase of the production of crops for internal consumption did not, on the whole, keep pace with population growth (Eckstein 1979, 468). Military chiefs took advantage of their position within the state to grab land on the agricultural frontier. The export boom of the 1970s enabled them to amass personal fortunes and concentrated land ownership in the lowlands (Eckstein 1979, 466, Gill 1987, 50).[43] Peasants had been migrating from the *altiplano* to the agricultural frontier since the 1950s (Gill 1987, 65—66), but the uneven availability of credit and infrastructure, coupled with soil erosion and the expansive tendencies of large-scale capitalist farms, led to diverse processes of class formation (Gill 1987, 94—105). During Barrientos' regime and the early Banzer years the BAB discriminated against peasants, preferring to lend to capitalist ventures. Until 1975, when USAID set up a credit program specifically for peasants, credit was not available to small-scale farmers (Eckstein 1983, 126). Some, with access to start-up capital, were able to build enterprises in and around agricultural; however, settlers found it increasingly hard to manage scarce resources and were increasingly forced into wage-labour activities essential for agribusiness.[44] This, coupled with the cheap credit available to agricultural enterprises, allowed lowland haciendas to be transformed into capitalist agribusinesses generating profit (Esckstein 1983, 127).[45] The upshot of these trends was a transformation of the space of Bolivia, as the axis of accumulation shifted from La Paz—Oruro—Potosí to La Paz—Cochabamba—Santa Cruz (Klein 2003, 252).

[42] They also increased tin-prices, from US$1.69 per pound in 1972 to US$5.72 per pound in 1978, and tin continued to represent a large proportion (70 percent) of foreign earnings.
[43] Anthropologist Lesley Gill observes that increasing concentration of landownership allowed a small group of growers to monopolise financial support, credit and resources at the expense of smaller growers (Gill 1987, 63).
[44] See Gill, 1987 Ch 4 and 5.
[45] 'From 1966 to 1978, international development agencies made approximately US$146 million available to both BAB and the commercial banks for agricultural credit' (Gill 1987, 52). Development banks preferred to loan to agriculture, which received 48 percent of all loans, compared to the 24 percent of loans that went to industry and developing Bolivia's productive capacity (Eckstein and Hagopian 1983, 77).

This was a historic time of defeat for the Left (Dunkerley 1984, 202),[46] and 'Left party activists, student leaders, labour leaders, church activists, and others' were imprisoned in remote camps as the Banzer regime attempted to systematically break the ideological left and its sympathisers (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 74—75). Under such repression, the workers saw their share of national income decline from 47 percent in 1971 to 31 percent in 1978 (Webber 2011b, 95—96). However, Banzer was incapable of achieving omnipotence, and despite his best attempts to replace the labour unions, semi-clandestine syndicate resistance continued, the regime struggling to stamp out the miners' long opposition tradition (Webber 2011b, 95). In January 1975, the FSTMB staged a two-week strike at Catavi-Siglo XX demanding that local radio stations were reopened. The strike, only two months after Banzer consolidated his power through an *autogolpe* (self-coup), was successful, and encouraged the return of labour leaders who began to organise for wage increases and workers' rights (Dunkerley 1984, 231). The miners of Siglo XX went on strike again in June of that year, and resistance radiated from the miners' heartland to other camps and to the factory-workers, supported by sections of an increasingly agitated peasantry (Dunkerley 1984, 232, Rivera 2003[1983], 161). This strike ultimately failed, but Zavaleta (2013[1983b], 108) highlights its historic importance as the first strike in the defence of democracy during the dictatorships. It demonstrated that the social forces of the Popular Assembly and the National Revolution had not been exterminated, but lay dormant waiting for the opportune moment.

By the end of 1977 the regime of repression undertaken by Banzer was cracking, having proved unwilling (or unable) to use the force necessary to eradicate all dissident sectors of the Bolivian population. Banzer proclaimed the relaxing associational restrictions and announced amnesty for some of those imprisoned during his tenure (Dunkerley 1984, 239). However, the 'amnesty' was very limited, leading miners' wives Aurora de Lora, Nelly de Paniagua, Angélica de Flores and Luzmila de Pimentel to march into the offices of Archbishop Manrique and demand for their exiled husbands to be returned (Dunkerley 1984, 240). Their hunger strike spread rapidly—supported by human-rights groups and the Catholic Church as well as the more militant indigenous activists and labour organisations—stripping the regime of

[46] According to Webber, 'human rights organisations documented a minimum of 200 dead, 14,700 imprisoned and 19,140 exiled' (Webber 2011b, 91).

what little legitimacy it had left and forcing Banzer to announce full amnesty for political dissidents and elections scheduled for July 1978 (Dunkerley 1984, 241).

The Emergence of Katarismo

The PMC came to an unceremonious end on the 29 January 1974 with the *Masacre del Valle* (Massacre of the Valley), but signs of rupture had started to appear as early as the late-1960s (Albó 1987, 388). Agrarian policy concentrated on agribusiness at the expense of the peasantry, eroding the legitimacy of the PMC and separating the peasant unions from their support base (Yasher 2005, 164). Although the Maoist-controlled BCI resisted Barrientos' attempts to tax the peasantry, and migrants cultivating non-traditional crops at the agricultural frontier (sugar, cotton, coca, soya in particular) formed the Confederación Sindical de los Colonizadores de Bolivia (Trade-Union Confederation of Colonizers, CSCB), they did not represent a clean break with the COB and the labour movement as a whole (Rivera 2003[1983], 148—49). This was only achieved with the emergence of *katarismo*.

Katarismo was divided into two parallel streams: *indianistas* who stressed racism as the source of subordination; and the *kataristas* who refused to reduce their oppression to one of class or race, and viewed it as a combination of the two (Yasher 2005, 168—69, Hylton and Thomson 2007, 87). On the one hand, the *indianista* movement was much more of an urban movement, and organised itself into political parties. On the other hand, the *kataristas* were much more successful at constructing trans-community links spanning the *altiplano* through a grassroots union base, particularly the Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (National Confederation of Peasant Workers of Bolivia, CNTCB) (Albó 1987, 401, Yasher 2005, 169). Their political dynamism and focus on class *and* ethnicity (*katarista's* famous 'seeing with two eyes') meant *kataristas* became the dominant and hegemonic force within the *katarismo* movement (Yasher 2005, 169). As the PMC started to falter, the writings of Fausto Reinaga (1970) inspired critiques of the dominant *mestizaje* ideology and spurned political action from a group of Aymara youth, first in high school and later at university in La Paz (Rivera 2003[1983], 151, Yasher 2005, 173). *Katarismo* offered a conceptual toolbox, grounded in indigenous knowledge and cosmology, to understand the daily racism and exclusion that many

faced on ventures into city life through university and the urban-rural migration flows that became increasingly important during this period (Webber 2011b, 100).

Although the heartland of the *kataristas* was the *altiplano*, the PMC was broken in its stronghold, the department of Cochabamba.[47] The relationship between the government of Hugo Banzer and the peasantry came to a head during January 1974, when Banzer tried to implement economic reforms and place the social cost of these changes onto the peasantry, removing state subsidies on a range of basic goods and services, thus increasing the price of consumer products by an average of 219 percent (Albó 1987, 396, Dunkerley 1984, 210). The response was impressive, as 20,000 peasants joined striking factory-workers and proceeded to block the highways linking Cochabamba to Santa Cruz, the Chapare, Oruro and Sucre (Rivera 2003[1983], 156). Banzer refused to negotiate and government troops concentrated in Tolata opened fire killing over 80 civilians (Rivera 2003[1983], 158).

The *Masacre del Valle* was an important moment in the *katarista* movement, and the late-1970s saw growing militancy in its *altiplano* heartland of the department of La Paz. *Kataristas* were involved in a number of protests at universities and were present in the workers' congress. They played an important role in the miners' strike in 1976, and the imprisonment of *katarista* militants in the same cells as the labour leaders only helped foster a relationship of solidarity and support between the two movements (Webber 2011b, 102). By 1977 the *kataristas* had become so strong within the CNTCB that the departmental authorities had lost control of many of its composite cantons to *katarista* Jenaro Flores (Rivera 2003[1983], 164). In May 1979 the COB invited the *kataristas* to attend their Fifth Congress, a historic affair where it was decided that a new peasant union federation, associated with the COB, would be formed (Webber 2011b, 103). A congress attended by the CNTCB-TK (the *katarista* faction of the CNTCB), the Julián Apasa Confederation (peasant appendage of the left-wing political umbrella UDP), and the truly independent sector of the BCI took place at the end of June, out of which emerged the Confederación Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (Unified Sindical Confederation of Peasant Workers of Bolivia, CSUTCB) with Flores as its first secretary (Albó 1987, 403). The CSUTCB would become a force in Bolivian politics, playing an important role in the

[47] See Albó (1984, 417), Rivera, (2003[1983], chapter 7) and Yashar (2005, 160) for explanations of the uneven nature of the PMC.

return to democracy. As with the peasant revolts and labour struggles of the 1940s, *Katarismo* thus laid the foundations for future struggles against neoliberalism and the rise of Bolivia's indigenous majority as serious political actors.

The Return of Democracy 1978–1985

The transition to democracy in Bolivia was characterised by constantly shifting alliances and counter-alliances, 'which witnessed 3 general elections, 6 bloody coups and 13 presidents' (Albó 1987, 398). This was a period of a crisis of the state, as political and economic crises intertwined and paved the way for the neoliberal reforms that followed in 1985. Under these intense conditions, indigenous peasants were increasingly forced into cities and the swelling ranks of the informal working-classes, laying the foundations of the neoliberal cities and neighbourhoods that would later emerge as El Alto and Plan 3000, Santa Cruz, my two fieldwork sites.

The situation as Bolivia headed to the polls in 1978 was complex, and the mere facade of elections was never going to be enough to ensure democracy took root.[48] The regime of Banzer saw popular forces reconstituted around an extra-parliamentary core, with large swathes of the population quite simply not represented by the political organisations competing in the elections. The old political parties descended into sectarianism, demonstrating the scant parliamentary legacy of the MNR and the democracy that followed the National Revolution, as well as the discord and divisions in the ruling classes (Dunkerley 1984, 250).[49] The three main competitors in the three elections were the left-wing alliance of the Unidad Democrática Popular (Democratic Popular Unity, UDP) led by Siles,[50] the right-wing Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario Histórico (Historic Revolutionary National Movement, MNRH) led by Paz Estenssoro and the far-right Acción Democrática Nacional (National Democratic Action, ADN) led by Juan Pereda in 1978 and Hugo Banzer in 1979 and 1980 (Webber 2011b, 104—

[48] Zavaleta (2013[1983b], 103) highlights that the deficiencies in Bolivian democracy meant that a coup d'état could gain as much legitimacy as an elected representative. Constitutionalism was viewed as 'intrinsically weak' by many in Bolivia, and governmental stability was by no means associated with constitutionalism and democracy (Dunkerley 2007, 117).

[49] The MNR itself was split down the middle into right- and left-wing factions.

[50] The UDP was comprised of the Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario de Izquierda (Revolutionary National Movement of the Left, MNRI); Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionario (Left Revolutionary Movement, MIR); and the Partido Comunista de Bolivia (Bolivian Communist Party, PCB).

05). A legitimate government did not emerge from the elections of 1978 and 1979, and by November 1979, forces in the military had gathered and Colonel Alberto Natusch Busch attempted to seize power, leaving over 200 people dead (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 136, Whitehead 1986, 645). This sixteen-day period revealed the apogee of an organic crisis in Bolivia as the two dominant blocs faced off: a popular bloc with the COB and the *katarista* movement at its heart, comprised of the multitude of subaltern classes formed under the *banzerato*; and the armed forces, trying to invoke a confused mix of the PMC and the bourgeoisie also consolidated under Banzer (Zavaleta 2013[1983b], 131).

As Colonel Natusch struggled to assume control, the COB called a general strike which was answered emphatically by the Aymara population of the *altiplano*, which responded using their traditional tactics of struggle, blocking the roads into La Paz and occupying territory (Webber 2011b, 105). This was an important moment in Bolivia's history, as it was the first time that the indigenous peasantry expressed widespread support for a general strike, leading Zavaleta (2013[1983b], 109) to speak of this moment as an 'axis of the constitution of the multitude', a movement that transcended class-based politics, where the very definition of peasant (and what it was to be indigenous) was extended and transformed.[51]

The Confederación de las Juntas Vecinales (Confederation of Neighbourhood Councils, CONALJUVE) along with the Federaciónes de los Juntas Vecinales (Federation of the Neighbourhood Committees, FEJUVEs) of major municipalities, most notably El Alto, also formed during this period at the First National Congress of Neighbourhood Committees in 1979 (García Linera *et al.*, 2004, 593). The FEJUVE-El Alto formed out of the Consejo Central de Vecinos (Central Committee of Neighbours), the initial organised effort by neighbours to demand basic services, including the installation of drinking water, electricity and transport services, during the 1950s (García Linera 2004, 592). The FEJUVE-Santa Cruz first was formed in 1960 (FEJUVE-Santa Cruz, unpublished document), whilst the *juntas vecinales* in La Paz have a much longer history, with the first embryonic neighbourhood groups forming around the turn of the twentieth century and congealing into a federation of neighbourhood groups in October 1916. However, the geography of La Paz limited

[51] Previous alliances between the peasantry and the working-classes (as in the 1967 strikes) were more localised.

the city's growth (Albó 2006, 331) and *paceños* (people from La Paz) already had a more developed infrastructure by the twentieth century and therefore did not have the urgent need (nor the radical streak) of their *alteño* (people from El Alto) cousins.

Affiliates of the FEJUVE-El Alto were present in the struggle against Natusch in November 1979 (Albó 2006, 337). Indigenous organisational principles of struggle were integrated into the working-class movement, and Jenaro Flores assumed the position of second in command within the COB. The *kataristas* became central protagonists in the movement, rupturing the rigid boundaries between the working classes and indigenous peoples (Zavaleta 2013[1982], 589). This would be a central feature of the revolutionary cycle of 2000-2005, and these struggles would have a legacy that reached far beyond simply the return to democracy.

Order was finally restored when longstanding MNR politician Lydia Gueiler Tejada became Bolivia's first, and thus far only, female president. Although her task was primarily to see Bolivia safely through to the elections of July next year, the first thing Gueiler attempted to do was tackle Bolivia's growing structural crisis, something that, until then had been neglected by the post-Banzer regimes (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 139). On 29 November she announced a 25 percent devaluation, a tax hike on mining activities and an IMF standby loan of US$111 million (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 139). The austerity package implemented by presidential decree (without discussion in congress) sparked widespread protests led by the COB and the CSUTCB. Gueiler struggled to contain the social forces unleashed in November 1979, limping to the polls on 29 June. The UDP won the most votes, this time achieving a majority. However, Siles was prevented from assuming power when on 17 July the head of the army, General Luis García Meza Tejada, finally orchestrated a coup d'état after months of open dissent (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 143).[52]

The Cocaine Coup

An examination of the history and political economy of cocaine production in Bolivia not only reveals the dynamics of the latter period of Banzer's regime and the military dictatorship of García Meza, it also helps explain the importance of the *cocalero* (coca grower) movement in the department of Cochabamba and the more clandestine

[52] See Dunkerley (1984, 281–88) for a detailed account of García Meza's plotting.

activities of the *cruceño* elite. During the crisis in cotton production in 1975–1976 agribusiness linked to the Asociación Nacional de Productores de Algodón (National Association of Cotton Producers, ADEPA) shifted capital into the cultivation of coca for export to external markets as cocaine (Gill 1987, 182–93). The epicentre of cultivation shifted from the traditional terraces of the Yungas in the department of La Paz, down to the tropical valleys of the Chapare region in the department of Cochabamba, fuelled by higher comparatively yields and frontier colonisers who, encouraged by the state, migrated to the Chapare in the 1960s (Farthing and Kohl 2010, 199, Healy 1988, 106, Ledebur 2005, 144).[53] Coca cultivation in the Chapare was not led by large-scale landowners; however, the agribusiness bourgeoisie based in Santa Cruz mediated the cotton-crisis by producing cocaine for the rapidly expanding international market, making full use of the strong ties between the military and the agricultural bourgeoisie, positioning Santa Cruz at the heart of Bolivia's cocaine trade (Dunkerley 1984, 315, Gill 1987, 193).[54]

This connection between the government of García Meza and the drug trade had severe international consequences for Bolivia, which was denied foreign credit initially by Jimmy Carter and later by Ronald Reagan (Gill 1987, 196). Declining terms of trade in traditional exports and a rising public debt (thanks to the economic policies of Banzer) placed extreme pressure on García Meza's government. Despite cocaine bucking the trend and being the only major primary export produced in Latin America to comparatively increase in value during the 1980s, the illegality of the product meant that Bolivia's economy saw little of the earnings (Dunkerley and Morales 1986, 97).[55] This, coupled with in-fighting and factionalism among the *narcotráficantes*, discontent among the bourgeoisie outside of the cocaine trade, and popular resistance led by a reinvigorated COB, eventually led to the downfall of García Meza. He was forced to hand over control to a temporary military junta in August 1981 (Webber 2011b, 107),

[53] Just over two-thirds of the Bolivian coca used to produce cocaine (a process mainly conducted outside of Bolivia) originates from the Chapare (Farthing and Kohl 2010, 200).
[54] It is difficult to ascertain whether Banzer was directly involved with the cocaine trade. However, high profile members of his government and members of his family were caught and charged with cocaine trafficking. Even more suspiciously, the Santa Cruz police raided Banzer's hacienda in early-1980 and discovered 300 kilograms of cocaine paste on the property (Dunkerley, 1984, 318–19). Also see Aspiazu (1982), Dunkerley and Morales (1986), Henkel (1986) and IEPALA editorial (1982) for accounts of the cocaine industry at this time.
[55] Cocaine's legal status meant it could not be taxed properly, and proceeds were laundered and then kept in offshore accounts away from the Bolivian government and economy.

which eventually gave power to the UDP to form a government in October 1982 (Malloy and Gamarra 1988, 154).

Economic Impasse: The Conjuncture of Neoliberalism's beginning

The government of Hernán Siles inherited dire economic circumstances: spiralling foreign debts, a stagnant export sector, capital flight and a restless working-class movement demanding higher wages (Conaghan *at al.* 1990, 11).[56] The populist regime of Siles tried to mediate the demands of the working-classes led by the COB to its left and the exigencies of the IMF and the CEPB to its right (Webber 2011b, 108). In trying to negotiate between the economic need to tackle a structural crisis and demands for austerity and the political expectations of the popular classes who represented the UDP's support-base, the government assumed a schizophrenic character and attempted to implement no fewer than five different economic packages (Malloy 1991, 49).[57] Under the threat of a general strike, the government raised wages and refused to push the costs of debt repayments and falling foreign export earnings onto the popular classes (Dunkerley 2007, 128). Debt repayments reached an astonishing 57 percent of export earnings, leading the government to finally succumb to the COB's demands to formally limit them (Dunkerley and Morales 1986, 89, Dunkerley 2007, 129). The UDP followed a program of de-dollarisation (and at times re-dollarisation) as Bolivia was racked with uncontrollable inflation, which reached a high of 23,000 percent in 1985, a Latin American record that stood until relatively recently (Malloy 1991, 38).[58]

Pressure from the COB was not the only internal force that the UDP had to contend with during its short term. It is a testament to the growth and strengthening of the lowland bourgeoisie that, for the first time, the CEPB offered a 'true class rival to the COB' (Malloy 1991, 48). The COB and CEPB both contested the official retail price indexing, and the COB organised a number of effective strikes. This emergent political

[56] 'Estimates for capital flight in 1980 and 1981 stood at US$370 million and US$347 million respectively' (Dunkerley 2007, 124).
[57] See Dunkerley (2007, 127) for a summary of the UDP's economic packages. Dunkerley (2007, 130) argues that these inconsistencies were rooted in political divisions within the UDP itself rather than total economic incompetency.
[58] Hyperinflation hit the poorest hardest, wiping out their meagre savings overnight (Arze and Kruse 2004, 24). Wealthy Bolivians had their savings stashed away in foreign bank accounts, shielded from the devastating effects of inflation.

crisis severely limited the UDP's economic options, because the orthodox route of deflation to try and diffuse the out of control economy was politically unviable (Dunkerley 2007, 130). By 1984 the regime had lost its legitimacy and was forced to call early elections for 1985, in which the UDP recorded a measly 5.4 percent of the vote (Dunkerley 2007, 129).

This turbulent period was also when my two main research sites, El Alto and Plan 3000, took shape. The economic crisis that plagued the period after the fall of the *banzerato* was exacerbated by an extreme weather event, El Niño-La Niña in 1982–83. In 1982 El Niño droughts on the altiplano decimated highland agriculture, especially in the department of Potosí (Dunkerley 1984, 347), and forced tens-of-thousands of *campesinos* off the *altiplano* and into the city of El Alto, expanding the population of the then-peripheral neighbourhood of La Paz from 95,000 people in 1976 to 223,000 in 1985 (Kohl and Arbona 2004, 58). This same weather phenomenon caused the river Piraí to burst its banks in January 1983, inundating large parts of the city of Santa Cruz and displacing 3000 families, who were relocated on the old city dump in the south-east of the city by then mayor Sergio Antelo, founding the Ciudadela Andrés Ibañez, more commonly known as Plan 3000 (Chávez León 2009, 1–2, Kirshner 2013, 547).[59] Although originally intended for 3000 families, Plan 3000 became a destination of choice for migrants from the interior, swelling to over 150,000 people by 2001 (INE 2001, cited in Kirshner 2013, 547). Both El Alto and Plan 3000 have become sites of political struggle and synonymous with the economic challenges faced by Bolivia, as chapters 6 and 7 show.

Conclusion

During the thirty-three-year period after the 1952 revolution Bolivia articulated itself more effectively than ever as a nation, whilst at the same time processes of urbanisation drew indigenous peasants to the cities of La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz, leading to the formation of my two research sites, El Alto and Plan 3000. Popular forces were vital political actors, with social struggles from below shaping the dialectical production of space, the state and class. The content of these popular

[59] Sergio Antelo was also coincidentally the founder of the right-wing autonomist movement based in Santa Cruz, *Nación Camba* (Camba Nation). This is discussed in more detail in chapters 4, 5 and 7.

forces developed throughout the second half of the twentieth century, with the miners, central actors of the 1952 state, being joined by a resurgent indigenous radicalism expressed through *katarismo* and the formation of the CSUTCB. Simultaneously, the economic dominance of the tin-barons was replaced initially with state-owned enterprises and later by incipient bourgeoisie linked to primary commodities export. An agricultural bourgeoisie emerged in the eastern lowlands, linked to export-orientated agriculture and the growing cocaine industry, and a financial bourgeoisie in La Paz and Santa Cruz developed in the wake of a small commodity and construction boom during the *banzerato*. Tin mining declined in profitability and economic importance as the hydrocarbons sector and export-orientated agribusiness expanded. These developments galvanised a shift in the economic axis from La Paz–Oruro–Potosí to La Paz–Cochabamba–Santa Cruz. However, the economy overall remained one reliant on extractivism and Bolivia continued to be inserted into global markets as a primary commodity producer.

These were the circumstances within which neoliberalism was implemented, and in the next decade the Bolivian state, class composition and spatial configurations would be transformed beyond recognition. However, these changes can only be understood in the context of the National-Revolutionary State, radical forms of working-class organisation led by the miners, accelerating processes of urbanisation and a resurgent rural indigenous movement.

Chapter 3
Class, Space and State in Neoliberal Bolivia

A theoretical perspective of neoliberalism has already been outlined in chapter 1. Here the focus is the historically specific processes of state formation, class formation and the emergence of new class fractions, and the production of space during the implementation of neoliberalism in Bolivia, which can be divided into two distinct phases: (1) the Nueva Política Económica (New Economic Policy, NPE) (1986–1993) which curbed hyperinflation whilst at the same time targeting the most organised sectors of the working-classes, resulting in pay freezes and job loses; and (2) the phase that commenced with the Plan de Todos (Plan for All, 1993–2005) which saw large-scale privatisation, agrarian reform and an re-imagination of popular participation.

The neoliberal period (1985–2005) was one when the state was transformed and entered into crisis, and in which Bolivia's political economy was changed beyond recognition.[60] The miners and the COB ceased to be the principal oppositional force, and new social forces created by neoliberalism's residual effects replaced them as the major oppositional bloc. State-owned enterprises were privatised, increasing the presence and importance of private capital. Simultaneously, labour was informalised, transforming the labour market, the experience of the working-classes in Bolivia and the cities where an increasing number of Bolivians lived. These processes of first dismantling and later reforming the working-classes, galvanised urbanisation and migration across the country, producing new spaces. The populations of El Alto and La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz all grew massively during this period, with the re-territorialisation of class, informalised construction and strategies for urban integration leaving new textures in Bolivia's urban landscape.

The First Wave of Neoliberalism: The New Economic Policy

After the failure of the UDP, there was a consensus that stabilisation of the economy was necessary. The ADN won most votes but not a majority in the 1985 elections, so

[60] This period extended beyond the Plan de Todo into the second phase of the progressive cycle, that of neoliberal crisis discussed in the next chapter.

struck a deal with the MNR known as the Pacto por la Democracia (Pact for Democracy), which brought Paz Estenssoro to the presidential palace for the third time (Conaghan and Malloy 1994, 214, Gamarra 1994, 108). Vitally, the pact gave Paz Estenssoro support from two-thirds of the congress needed to pass controversial policies (Gamarra 1994, 112). He immediately set about restructuring the Bolivian economy, drawing from the World Bank rehabilitation programme launched in April 1981 but never fully implemented by the García Meza dictatorship (Crabtree et al. 1987, 79). The NPE was introduced through supreme decree DS21060 on the 28 August 1985, under a month after Paz Estenssoro assumed office (Grindle 2003b, 323).

Designed by a small number of technocrats—led by Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, future president and owner of the largest mining enterprise in the country COMSUR, and Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs—the NPE was the harshest neoliberal shock doctrine experienced in Latin America (Conaghan et al. 1990, 4, Dunkerley 2007, 170). *Grosso modo* the new government attempted to achieve three goals: (1) liberalise the economy; (2) encourage the growth of the private sector; and (3) wrestle control of state-owned enterprises from the COB (Gamarra 1994, 105). The peso was floated, simultaneously devaluing the currency (in an opaque manner) by 1,300 percent. Subsidies for fuel and food were ended, restrictions on hiring and firing practices and financial operations lifted, and public sector wages frozen in preparation for negotiations for a debt relief program with the IMF (Crabtree et al. 1987, 15, Dunkerley 2007, 149). These measures were accompanied by the reformation of the Bolivian banking sector and the implementation of a uniform import tariff of 20 percent (Dunkerley 2007, 149, Grindle 2003b, 320). The IMF and the Inter-American Development bank (IDB) were suitably impressed with the US-designed programme, and the first IMF stand-by loan agreement in a decade was announced just days before the 1986-87 budget (Dunkerley 2007, 152–53).

In the wake of the economic crisis that reached its zenith in 1985, the state was framed, in the words of NPE architects, as ‘practically destroyed’, an institutional shell with a ‘feudalised’ productive apparatus, where corruption had been ‘institutionalised’ and the ‘mechanisms of control and oversight [had] stopped working’ (Conaghan et al. 1990, 18). This position allowed the market to be presented as the only solution to crisis, with the Bolivian state having assumed a form so weak and corrupt that it should be excluded from any activity that could otherwise be performed by the market. Bolivia

thus moved from the state-led economy of the post-1952 period to a market-led economic model (Arauco 2000 254, Healy and Paulson 2000, 5). Private companies were presented as protagonists of economic progress and social advancement in general (Arze and Maita Pérez 2000, 13). The state transformed (but did not disappear) as it was stripped of its roles in capital accumulation (most notably through the dismantling of COMIBOL, which effectively ceased to function after the NPE) and as a source of employment (Kruse, 2001, 166).[61] Ironically, as this was part of an attempt to restrengthen state power, political decisions were delegated to a small circle of US-trained technocrats who followed through the programme of economic reforms with a gusto that bordered on fanaticism, believing 'these decisions should not be subjected to bargaining and politicking' (Conaghan et al. 1990, 19). This small group of advisors remained insulated from the political uncertainty that surround the 'pact democracies'. Thus although economic reforms were implemented and state authority rebuilt, democracy remained weak, something that would return to undermine future neoliberal governments (Phillip 1999, 35).

The impact of the NPE was stark—and almost immediate—with inflation falling from 23,000 percent in 1985 to 10 percent in 1986 (Gamarra 1994, 105). Export orientated sectors benefitted nicely from the changes, with the more 'realistic' exchange rates and liberated financial system offering opportunities to mining groups, finance capital and those involved in commerce (including contraband and cocaine) (Crabtree et al. 1987, 78). The dismantling of COMIBOL and the privatisation of mining activities offered new opportunities to capital. Small-scale cooperatives or medium-size private firms stepped into the breach left by state-led mining, increasing investment, production and exports in the process (Sanabria 1999, 538). It is no surprise that the NPE architects (including Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada) were drawn from these fractions of Bolivian capital and were already integrated into broader transnational circuits of capital. Indeed, Catherine Conaghan, James Malloy and Luis Abugattas (1990, 4) argue that the 'new anti-statist discourse grew out of [the local bourgeoisie's] disillusionment with the state-centric policies of military governments and with the access problems experienced by business interest groups under those governments'. This transformation of the state was thus also intimately tied to the class

[61] Grindle (2003, 330) also highlights that this continued into the second phase of neoliberalism.

project of the Bolivian bourgeoisie which had emerged under Banzer in the 1970s, with the state-market dichotomy used to mask other concurrent transfers of power.

The Decomposition of the Working-Classes

The Pacto por la Democracia ensured the success of the initial phase of neoliberalism in Bolivia, and allowed the government to launch a full-frontal attack on the working classes (Kruse 2001, 155). In September 1985, the government announced a state of siege, arresting and banishing key figures in the labour movement (Webber 2011b, 118). This removed the last semblance of resistance to reform, enabling the government to weather a possible crisis when the global tin market crashed in October.[62] The fall in tin prices caused a major problem for COMIBOL, but this crisis also allowed the government to shed 23,000 formally employed COMIBOL-miners from the state's workforce (Sanabria 2000, 66). The FSTMB launched a counter offensive but it was futile. The labour movement was decapitated, lacking legitimacy in the rest of society and unable to mount a general strike.[63] Food prices tripled and the *pulpurías* (company store) were left unstocked, wages stagnated and pits privatised during a time of immense hardship and anxiety as the price of tin plummeted from US$6 per-pound in 1985 to US$2.50 per-pound in 1986, forcing the majority of the remaining miners out of the mining enclaves (Sanabria 1999, 543).

By 1987, 27,000 out of the 30,000 miners had lost their jobs (McFarren 1992, 131). In a last-ditch attempt to confront the hardships of the old mining communities, the FSTMB signed an agreement with the CSUTCB and embarked upon the 'March in Defence of Life' in 1986, led by women of the mining communities (Nash 1992, 280, Sanabria 1999, 544). The civic committees of Potosí and Oruro called a strike and blocked the roads, and the miners were joined by teachers and students—who recognised the centrality of mining to the maintenance of these communities—as well as peasants in a march that at times numbered 10,000 (Nash, 1992, 277–78). The state repressed the marchers using excessive force and coercion, deploying tanks and military planes to prevent the march from reaching La Paz. Women waved the Bolivian flags to remind the soldiers of their status as citizens, but after a tense stand-

[62] See Crabtree *et al.* (1987, Ch3) for an excellent account of the great tin crash.
[63] The strike only took hold in Huanuni, being ineffective in the rest of the country (Dunkerley 2007, 156).

off at Calamarca the miners were forced to return to their districts (Nash 1992, 283). The COB and the FSTMB, Hylton and Thomson (2007, 96) contend, would never again demonstrate the same capacity to mobilise such a wide array of forces.[64]

A central legacy of neoliberal reforms was 'the social dispersal of labour as a unified movement' (Albro, 2009, 42). The relocation of the miners described above epitomised how labour was made to pay for economic restructuring, but it was by no means an anomaly. One-time advisor to the Bolivian government Thomas Kruse (2001, 166) estimates that public sector employment fell from 24 percent to 13 percent of the economically active population between 1985 and 1995. Simultaneously, employers in the private sector exploited the ambiguity and inconsistencies in labour regulations brought about by Decree 21060—which 'eliminated the legal requirements for government authorisation of dismissal and enabled employment through short-term contracts'—to streamline the workforce (Cook 2007, 179–80).[65] Within two years a total of 460,000 workers had lost their jobs: 6,000 in private-sector mining, 10,000 in public administration, 2,000 in the banking sector and over 110 factories closed (on top of the 27,000 state miners) (Kruse 2001, 159).

The Acuerdo Patriótico, the Rise of Soya and the Recomposition of the Working-Classes

The Pacto por la Democracia was followed by the Acuerdo Patriótico (Patriotic Accord, AP), when Jaime Paz Zamora, supported by ex-dictator Hugo Banzer, became president as the ADN and the Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionario (Left Revolutionary Movement, MIR) formed a government in 1989 (Gamarra 1996, 74).

Although the Acuerdo Patriótico was in effect an interim government with no clear economic programme of its own (Gamarra 1994, 106), there were a number of important developments between 1989 and 1993. Firstly, the MIR government awarded more land titles in the eastern lowland that any other government apart from that of Banzer: 145,000 separate parcels with a combined total of 7.5 million hectares

[64] As I have argued elsewhere (see McNelly 2018), this does not confirm the irrelevance of the labour movement, whose role did not disappear but changed.
[65] By the end of the 1990s, Bolivia's core labour code had not significantly changed since its introduction under military socialism in 1939. As a result, adjustments to the code are made by simply adding new legal dispositions to the code. By some estimates a total of 4,200 such dispositions—including Decree 21060—had been added over the years (Cook 2007, 177).

(Soruco 2008, 67). This, coupled with the 1989 World Bank Proyecto de Tierras Bajas del Este: Administración de Recursos Naturales y Producción Agrícola (Project of the Eastern Lowlands: Agricultural Production and Natural Resource Administration) and the fact that Bolivia was the only soybean-producing nation that joined the Comunidad Andina de Naciones (Andean Community of Nations, CAN) multilateral trade agreement, increased the land cultivated for soya production from 1990 onwards (Castañón 2017, 18). Policy once again favoured highly capitalised, large-scale export-orientated operations (Healy and Paulson 2000, 11), and by 2005 soya composed 43 percent of non-traditional exports (14 percent of global soya exports) (Soruco 2008, 75). Agribusiness was the most dynamic sector during the mid-1990s, experiencing a boom until 1998 and growing at an impressive 20 percent annually (Casteñón 2017, 19, Healy and Paulson 2000, 11).

Massive profits from soya exports provided capital for the burgeoning financial sector in Santa Cruz. Finance (and its derivatives, including construction), agricultural production, and industrialisation became inexorably intertwined in the eastern lowlands, and the mixture of industrialisation in agricultural production and the speculation on land and financial derivatives formed new fractions of the *cruceña* bourgeoisie and further concentrated wealth in the region. The sector came to be dominated by US, Brazilian, Peruvian and Bolivian capital, with a small number of firms responsible for industrialisation, exportation, and capital provision for the sector (Soruco 2008, 79). These activities created few forward or backward linkages to the rest of the Bolivian economy, and the city of Santa Cruz was drawn into transnational circuits of capital, transforming part of it into a global, outwards facing city, in the main sheltered from the vicissitudes of national dynamics. This became important for the autonomist movement in the department of Santa Cruz (discussed further in chapter 5), both as part of a discourse of modernity and a material basis for economic independence from the central government in La Paz.

Secondly, the Paz Zamorra government laid the foundations for the second wave of neoliberalism that followed, representing a transitional phase in the country's neoliberal trajectory. Whilst Paz Zamora's government did not implement privatisation, future president of the YPFB under Evo Morales, Carlos Villegas Quiroga (2004, 64), highlights that it laid the foundation for what followed, implanting a philosophy that regarded foreign firms in the same light as domestic companies. Its major contribution was the laws allowing for private-public partnerships in mining and hydrocarbons

introduced between 1990 and 1991: the Mining Actualisation Law, the Hydrocarbons Law and the Investment Code (Cook 2007, 175). Although little changed in the structure of the Bolivian economy until the 1993 elections and the introduction of the second phase of neoliberalism, these laws enabled the privatisation that was to come.

Finally, this was a time when processes recomposing the working-classes were initiated and a period of massive proletarianisation, as rural peasants and women were increasingly forced into waged labour; the size of the economically active population (EAP) increased by roughly half in six years, from 837,000 in 1989 to 1,228,000 in 1993 (Arze and Maita Pérez 2000, 37). Despite massive layoffs, unemployment levels remained below 5 percent during the late—1980s and early—1990s (Kruse 2001, 167). There are two overarching reasons for this. Firstly, private firms increasingly used the space opened by Decree 21060 to informalise private sector employment: 'in 1994', Maria Lorena Cook (2007, 181) states, 'only 14 percent of the formal private-sector contracts registered with the government in that year were "indefinite" contracts; 68 percent were fixed-term contracts and 18 percent were for short-term, specific projects'. The quality of employment in private firms decreased, with flexibilisation of labour contracts and the pushing of the cost of social reproduction (e.g., healthcare, pensions, education) from the firm and the state onto individual citizens allowing private capital to reduce costs. In 1989, 79.9 percent of formally waged labourers had permanent contracts, compared to only 74.9 percent by 1995 (Arze and Maita Pérez 2000, 63). Secondly, self-employment or economic activity in already informalised small scale firms (e.g., commerce, transport and artisanal workshops producing consumer goods for local consumption) was responsible for the majority of job creation in the region during the 1990s, with 8 out of 10 new jobs created to be found in these sectors (Kruse 2001, 165). In El Alto, the number of self-employed rose from 27 percent of the workforce in 1992 to 38 percent by 2001 (Albó 2006, 340). Outsourcing enabled costs to be cut by private enterprises, and by 1995 the proportion of workers employed by semi-firms had risen from 11.9 percent in 1989 to 22.3 percent (Arze and Maita 1999, 37; see table 3.2).[66]

[66] Semi-companies are micro-firms where as well as performing administrative tasks, employees also are involved with productive activities (Arze and Maita Pérez 2000, 18).

The Second Wave of Neoliberalism: Privatisation and the Plan de Todos

Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, commonly known as 'Goni' and the *gringo* [because of his US-accent], was elected in 1993 on a ticket of 'El Plan de Todos' (The Plan for All), provoking a great deal of expectation, especially regarding his promise to reduce the rampant corruption of Paz Zamora's tenure (Gamarra 1996, 79). Sánchez de Lozada formed a government through the Pacto de la Gobernabilidad (Governability Pact), which surprisingly brought populist and beer-magnet Max Fernández and his Unión Civica Solidaridad (Solidarity Civic Union, UCS) party into government (Gamarra 1996, 80). Moreover, Víctor Hugo Cárdenas—a central figure of the *katarismo* movement—was selected as vice-president, marking a watershed moment in Bolivian politics (Gamarra 1996, 79). Having a prominent indigenous figure in the government would be key to the second phase of neoliberalism and its multicultural agenda, giving neoliberalism a social face (Webber 2011b, 136).

The government of Paz Estenssoro successfully resisted pressures from the Bretton Woods institutions to privatise.[67] However, under the government of Goni privatisation became a central pillar of the second phase of neoliberalism in Bolivia (Farthing and Kohl 2006, 107). The 1994 Ley de Capitalización (Law of Capitalisation) transferred US$1,600 million of state-owned productive assets into the hands of (mainly) foreign capital (Kruse 2001, 162), and represented the principal transformation of the productive matrix in Bolivia during neoliberalism (Arze 2000, 21). Capitalised firms produced approximately 12.5 percent of GDP and, thanks to hydrocarbons, 60 percent of government revenue. Between 1995 and 1997 YPFB, Lloyd Aéreo Boliviano (Bolivian Airline Lloyd, LAB), Empresa Nacional de Energía (National Energy-Company, ENDE), Empresa Nacional de Telecomunicaciones de Bolivia (National Telephone Company, ENTEL), and the Empresa Nacional de Ferrocarriles de Bolivia (National Railway Company, ENFE) were all privatised (Farthing and Kohl 2006, 109). The government initially tried to retain a controlling 51 percent stake of privatised firms. Instead of paying the government directly, the new owners would instead commit to doubling the book value of each business within seven years, increasing working capital from US$2 billion to US$10 billion (Kohl 2004, 897).

[67] The Bretton Woods institutions are the IMF and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), one of the five member institutions of the World Bank, formed at the Bretton Woods conference in 1944.

Discounting the changes in the use and destiny of surplus value, the most important outcomes of capitalisation, according to CEDLA economist Carlos Arze (2000, 21), were 'the disintegration of [capitalised] companies into a variety of different units, positioned in specific parts of the production process, and the application of new forms of company management, that transformed the organisation of work and flexibilised labour relations'. Linda Farthing and Ben Kohl (2006, 111) argue that capitalisation involved a number of basic assumptions that affected the outcomes of the program's implementation. The first assumption was investment by capitalised firms would have a multiplier effect on the economy as a whole. Whilst new owners did invest heavily in capitalised firms, the majority of investment was capital intensive and concentrated in the hydrocarbons sector. Resource extraction has few forward and backward linkages with the Bolivian economy, creating few jobs and having little multiplier effect (Farthing and Kohl 2006, 111–12). Demand for Bolivian labour did not materialise despite GDP growth remaining around 4 percent from 1994 until 1998 (see table 3.4). Moreover, capitalisation led to a scale of layoffs for unionised workers not seen since the NPE (Farthing and Kohl 2006, 112). The second assumption was available investment capital would be used by Bolivian entrepreneurs to create employment. However, demand for national investment capital remained low and small firms lacked access to credit and technology. The result was a structurally heterogeneous economy with a stratified configuration of Bolivian firms (Grebe López 1998, 8). The third assumption was that increased investment and productivity would increase share prices of capitalised firms. However, the combined share prices of the capitalised firms in the Fondo de Capitalización Colectiva (Collective Capitalisation Fund, FCC) dropped from US$1.67 billion initially to US$774 million in 2001 (Farthing and Kohl 2006, 115). The fourth assumption was that the increased tax base would offset the loss of hydrocarbons revenues. Capitalisation split the hydrocarbons sector into exploration and exploitation, distribution and transportation, refining and commercialisation to try and further encourage foreign investment (Arze 2000, 22). The 1996 Hydrocarbons Law (Law 1689) set wellhead royalties paid to the state by transnational firms at 50 percent at existing sites and 18 percent at new discoveries. 'New' and 'existing' reserves were then redefined just two months after the Hydrocarbons Law, reducing the known extraction sites and excluding the massive gas fields of San Alberto and San Antonio from the higher tax rate (Spronk and Webber 2007, 34). This loss of state revenue was not offset by an expanded tax base

(which failed to materialise), and when coupled with the cost of capitalisation, led to a US$430 million budget deficit (Farthing and Kohl 2006, 115).

The Structure of the Neoliberal Labour Market

The second phase of neoliberalism undertaken by Goni consolidated the structure of the Bolivian economy and formed the basis of the Bolivian economy today. Contrary to what the architects of capitalisation claimed, the policy did not redistribute wealth among the Bolivian people, with the benefits accruing in the accounts of large multinational corporations (Lagos 2001, 273). Economic liberation towards unrestricted commerce forced many Bolivian firms into bankruptcy, especially in the already declining manufacturing sector (Arze 2000, 22). The manufacturing industry increasingly broke into small-scale production units exploiting cheap labour costs and the elimination of labour regulations. The part of the mining sector without access to capital also experienced the breakdown of firm sizes as the number of mining cooperatives and their share of the labour market increased (Arze 2000, 23).

Economist Horst Grebe López (1998, 8–9) identifies four layers that emerged in the Bolivian neoliberal economy: (1) 10 capitalised firms which control strategic sectors of the economy and provide basic services to the population; (2) some 100 domestic and foreign financial groups principally present in industry, mining, agribusiness and banking; (3) a scant industrial base comprised of a minute number of technologically backward firms; and (4) some 500,000 micro-firms consisting of between 1 and 4 people operating in commerce and services in the popular economy as well as in agriculture, without access to credit or technology to improve their low-productivity.

The absence of modernisation beyond a handful of key capital-intensive sectors mentioned above meant firms found other ways to compensate lack of productivity in order to survive. Costs were reduced through a variety of different mechanisms that had the net result of cutting wages and social security benefits attached to employment, externalising the labour force through outsourcing, and lengthening the working day (Arze 2000, 25). The majority of Bolivians found themselves in disguised forms of wage labour in the informal popular economy, working in one of the 500,000 micro-firms, as the restructuring of work augmented the number of traditional *cudrillas* (work-groups) rather than increasing the quality of work

or offering workers more control of the production process (Arze 2000, 24). By 1995, informal firms employed 68 percent of the labour force as economic restructuring shifted the responsibility of job creation onto micro firms and family enterprises (Arze 2000, 28; see also table 3.1). As table 3.1 shows, the major changes in the labour market were the decline in the public sector and the increase in semi-company (informal) work, characterised by insecure employment conditions without a formal contract, irregular and changing working-conditions and piecemeal pay. These micro-firms formed part of an invisible network of services and subcontracting that maintained the competitiveness of national production (Arze 2000, 25). However, processes of employment informalisation also penetrated the so-called 'formal' economy and affected even some municipal jobs (Arze 2000, 27), and the proportion of formal workers with permanent contracts dropped drastically during this period (see table 3.2).

Table 3.1: Structure of Employed Population by Labour Market Sector

Labour Market Sector	% employed by sector			Annual Rate of Annual Growth		
	1989	**1992**	**1995**	**1989**	**1992**	**1995**
TOTAL	**100**	**100**	**100**	**4.76**	**8.09**	**6.14**
State	18.14	15.52	13.16	0.50	1.71	1.00
Company	19.74	20.99	18.41	6.44	3.03	5.03
Semi-company	11.90	18.74	22.34	17.16	14.88	16.22
Family	43.46	38.81	40.56	1.67	9.81	5.03
Domestic	6.76	5.94	5.52	1.22	5.28	2.90

Source: Arze and Maita Pérez 2000, 37

The results of this reorganisation of the labour market were profound. Bolivia was plagued by underemployment—reaching 53 percent of the EAP in 1997 by some estimates—and an increasing number of people were forced into second jobs to support their families (Arze 2000, 30–34, Kruse 2001, 167). The majority of Bolivians suffered the 'violation of individual and collective rights' through this increased precariousness, and social divisions in Bolivian society dramatically widened (Arze and Kruse 2004, 23).

Table 3.2: Labour Stability of Waged Workers by Sector 1989–1995

Labour Market Sector	1989			1992		
	Total	**Permanent**	**Fixed Contract**	**Total**	**Permanent**	**Fixed Contract**
TOTAL	**100**	**79.92**	**20.08**	**100**	**78.1**	**21.9**
State	100	93.28	6.72	100	92.80	7.20
Company	100	74.23	25.77	100	74.45	25.55
Semi-company	100	66.02	33.98	100	66.70	33.30
TOTAL	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
State	39.76	46.41	13.31	31.91	31.91	37.92
Company	37.24	34.59	47.78	39.59	39.59	37.74
Semi-company	23.00	19.00	38.91	28.49	28.49	24.34

Labour Market Sector	1995		
	Total	**Permanent**	**Fixed Contract**
TOTAL	**100**	**74.93**	**25.07**
State	100	92.30	7.70
Company	100	74.36	25.64
Semi-company	100	61.00	39.00
TOTAL	**100**	**100**	**100**
State	28.93	35.63	8.89
Company	36.53	36.25	37.36
Semi-company	34.54	28.12	53.75

Source: Arze and Maita Pérez 1999, 63

The working week increased from 45.5 hours-a-week for workers in 1985 to 50.5 hours-a-week, as the exploitation of labour intensified (CEDLA-ILDIS 1994, 44, cited in Rivera 1996a, 198). However, despite the increased importance of informalised employment, these sectors remained structurally unaffected by privatisation and capitalisation, and continued to be plagued by low productivity and limited access to capital (Grebe López 1998, 14). The strong negative correlation between the

economic dynamism of different sectors and the employment creating sectors shows that there was little advancement in the modernisation of the productive apparatus during this period (Arze 2000, 29). The initial phase of neoliberalism in Bolivia thus restructured the labour market and the economy as a whole to meet the needs of capital, whilst labour bore the brunt of the social costs of the economic crisis of the 1980s well into the 1990s.

Neoliberal Multiculturalism and Decentralisation

In Bolivia there were two other central aspects of the second phase of neoliberalism: neoliberal multiculturalism and local-level participation of citizens. Neoliberal multiculturalism affirmed

> cultural difference, while retaining the prerogative to discern between cultural rights consistent with the ideal of liberal, democratic pluralism, and cultural rights inimical to that ideal. In so doing, they advance a universalistic ethic which constitutes a defence of the neoliberal capitalist order itself (Hale, 2002: 491).

This is most visible in the 1994 constitution, which describes Bolivia as a 'multiethnic and pluricultural state' (Bolivia 1994a, Art.1) and states that the 'social, economic and cultural rights of indigenous peoples... particularly those relating to their original community lands, are recognised, guaranteeing the use and sustainable exploitation of their natural resources, and of their identities, values, languages, customs and institutions' (Bolivia 1994a, Art.171, cited in Van Cott 2000, 176). The 1994 constitution inaugurated a new phase of the Bolivian state, which recognised—both legally and politically—'the plurality of cultures and peoples that lived in the national territory' (Wanderley 2008, 224).

This new multicultural state form was largely implemented through three laws: (1) the 1996 Ley del Instituto Nacional de Reforma Agraria (National Agrarian Reform Institute Law, Ley INRA); (2) the 1994 Ley de Reforma Educativa (Educational Reform Law); and (3) the 1994 Ley de Participación Popular (Law of Popular Participation, LPP). Although addressing slightly different aspects of the Bolivian state, they wove together neoliberal multicultural and decentralisation, and were enthusiastically supported in different capacities by transnational financial institutions, especially the World Bank (Stefanoni 2002, 15).

The rapidly expanding agricultural frontier during the soy boom occurred with little regulatory oversight, with the Bolivian government so eager to attract investment that it was essentially giving away frontier land (McKay and Colque 2016, 5). Ley INRA was an attempt to regain some semblance of state control over these territories through ensuring that all medium and large-scale landholding had a social and economic function (Francescone 2012, 66). Ley INRA also introduced Tierras Comunitarias de Origen (Communitarian Lands of Origin, TCOs), which was used by rural highland indigenous movements to reconstitute the territorial unit of the *ayllu* as a political unit (Poweska 2013, 120). Ley INRA therefore represented the concurrent legalisation of both indigenous autonomous units following the ILO convention 169 and a land market that benefited large-scale *latifundias* and agroindustrial production units (Kohl 2003, 342, Salazar 2013, 59, Urioste and Kay 2005, 36).[68] It left patterns of landownership largely intact whilst introducing an individualised, market logic into agricultural production (Webber 2011b, 169).

The educational reform introduced bilingual (Spanish and indigenous languages) curriculums to Bolivian school for the first time, an important step in the creation of a multicultural and pluriethnic state (Contreras 2003, 278). Designed with the help of the World Bank, education was transformed into a service for students, with the reforms focusing on changes in four main areas to improve the education system: coverage, quality, equity and efficiency (Contreras 2003, 273). Moreover, communities were given freedom to design school programmes and participate in their implementation through *juntas escolares* (school committees) (Contreras 2003, 278). However, as Lesley Gill (2000, 87) underscores, the educational reform threatened teachers' 'job security, wages and the right to continue their profession amid an eroding public education system'. Education purported to offer a route out of poverty for the children of the poorest families, although this promise was rarely realised, as the sparsity of resources left teachers hard pushed to deliver adequate results (Gill 2000, 184). This sometimes pit teachers against parents, who saw the sector putting their salaries above the education of their children. It also transformed the teachers—

[68] *Latifundia* are large-scale agricultural units in Latin America sometimes associated with peon or bonded labour.

led by their Trotskyist union—into one of the most radical sectors fighting neoliberal reforms (García Linera et al., 2004: 71–75).[69]

The most influential law of the three central pillars of neoliberal multiculturalism in urban spaces was the LPP, which would have a lasting effect on Bolivian politics and continues to shape quotidian interactions between the state and civil society actors. The goal of the LPP was, through decentralisation, to 'better the quality of life for Bolivian women and men with a more equitable distribution and better administration of public resources' (Bolivia 1994b, 7, Art.1). It divided the country into 311 municipalities (Ströbele-Gregor 1997, 3) and doubled the municipal authorities' share of the national budget from 10 percent to 20 percent (Kohl 2003, 343). By doing so, local authorities were assigned most administrative responsibilities of the state, including 'complete control over and responsibility for investing in construction and maintenance of health, education, roads, micro-irrigation and sport facilities' (Kohl 2003, 343). The new civil society actors central to popular participation were called Organizaciones Territoriales de Base (Base Territorial Organisations, OTB) and composed of 'peasant communities, indigenous peoples and *juntas vecinales* [neighbourhood committees] organised according to their customary practices and statutory dispositions' (Bolivia 1994b, 8, Art.3). These OTB were integrated into the state and awarded new rights and responsibilities through *personalidad jurídica* (legal personality) status, in the process becoming the principal routes taken by public resources between the state and civil society (Lazar 2008, 68). They were given input into the use of these resources through the writing of the 5 year Plan de Desarrollo Municipal (Municipal Development Plan, PDM) and the Programa de Operaciones Anuales (Annual Operating Programme, POA), whilst also performing important oversight functions as members of the Comité de Vigilancia (Oversight Committee).

However, the LPP was not without serious design flaws. Somewhat ironically, the design and execution of the LPP excluded a participatory process (Van Cott 2000, 157). As Merilee Grindle (2003, 331–32) highlights, young *cruceño* academic Carlos Hugo Molina was the driving force behind the changes, and not even MNR ministers were given access to the closed-door meetings to develop the law. Luis Tapia (2002, 19) also stresses the incongruence between the LPP's form and implementation,

[69] Author interview with Lucio González, ex-leader within the COB during the 1980s and 1990s, 15/03/2016

stating 'the composition of [multicultural] forms of government should be a product of democratic deliberation and a process where each political culture, in order to articulate itself within the government, should be reformed by and be a reformer of the other [political cultures]'. Moreover, although municipalities are invited to '[p]articipate and promote actions related to environmental management, ecological equilibrium, and sustainable development' (Bol 1994b, Art. 7, cited in Kohl 2002, 465), they are excluded from a number of activities related to these goals, most notably input into hydrocarbons extraction (Kohl 2002, 465). This has led a number of commentators to call the LPP 'democracy from above' (Ströbele-Gregor 1997, 2) or 'reformism from above' (Grindle 2003b, 333). Thus the LPP centralised the power of the state even as it sought to delegate some of its responsibilities (Laserna 1995, 223).

The LPP failed to account for the unequal natural of Bolivian society. In rural areas, the framing of indigenous territorial system was superficial and did not capture its complexity in social units such as the *ayllu* (Poweska 2013, 122). Particularly salient in urban areas, the LPP was silent on class divisions and the domination of micro-level politics by local elites (Gill 2000, 9). Both Lazar (2008) for El Alto and Goldstein (2004) describe how class divisions affect community formation and participation in political processes. In the southern part of the city of Cochabamba, Goldstein underscores how local leaders use networks of political patronage and *compadrazgo* to 'direct the growth and development of the *barrio*',[70] acquiring political power and economic renumeration along the way (Goldstein 2004, 102). A survey performed by Secretario Nacional de Participación Popular (National Secretariat of Popular Participation, SNPP) found that whilst Oversight Committees participated in 80 percent of the long-run (5 year) PDM, only 33 percent of committees had a say in the POAs, which allocated financial resources for that year (cited in Farthing and Kohl 2006, 139).

Decentralisation transferred fiscal responsibility from the central government onto local authorities (Gill 2000, 49). Despite revenue sharing between the central and municipal governments, small municipalities, unable to adequately fill their budget purse thanks to their small tax-bases, found themselves worse off than before because of the increased administrative costs implied by decentralisation. Roads, schools, bridges, health-clinics and sports facilities are significant investments for small

[70] *Compadrazgo* is ritual co-parenthood which forges fictitious kinship bonds between godparents and the families of their godchildren (Goldstein 2004, 37–38, 103).

communities (Farthing and Kohl 2006, 138).[71] Moreover, local government increasingly turned to municipal taxes to offset these higher costs, catalysing a number of violent conflicts between the local state and the historically tax-averse Bolivian population (Farthing and Kohl 2006, 138). In this context, international donors, through NGOs, became important providers of services. These organisations were often incapable of filling the hole left in state services, and there was no way to ensure the quality of services from third parties (Gill 2000, 51–52, Lazar 2008, 70–72).

Several authors have noted that the LPP acted as a 'divide and rule' approach designed to nullify the potency of social movements (e.g., Contartese and Deledicque 2013, 47, Gill 2000, 49). MAS functionary Jorge Silva marvels at how successful the LPP was at orientating local leaders and movements away from struggles against the large-scale structural changes catalysed by neoliberalism to squabbles over funds and projects at the local level that did not have a wide-ranging scope for change.[72] The interests of local leaders were aligned with the state through awarding political and economic power via the official channels of the LPP, breeding the conditions in which political patronage and clientelism flourished (Lazar 2008, 68). *Juntas vecinales* became bureaucratised through the state-designated forms of participation and 'replacing the idea of service with the liberal logic of political and financial profit' (Dinerstein 2015, 150–51). As Comités de Vigilancia could only oversee and not contribute directly, the ultimate decision-making powers remained with those in local office (and consequently with political parties), meaning that local leaders became incorporated into the party system as they sought to better control and influence the flow of resources through the POA. Indeed, this patronage system became so ingrained in Bolivian politics during the 1990s that it even characterised the relations between local communities and NGOs in El Alto (Gill 2000, 166). NGOs offered new opportunities to the middle-classes able to present themselves as the stakeholders central to development projects, whilst simultaneously fragmenting working-class forms of organisations (Gill 2000, 156).[73]

[71] César Guzmán, of the Juntas Escolares El Alto, noted that despite the emphasis on education, in practice the LPP provided the municipal of El Alto with scare resources to build much needed new schools. César Guzmán, Juntas Escolares de El Alto, interview, El Alto, 21/07/2016.
[72] Jorge Silva, Consejo Municipal de La Paz, interview, La Paz, 26/09/2016.
[73] Lesley Gill (2016) also analyses similar processes of the decomposition of working-class organisation and its relationship to NGOs and the human rights nexus in the oil-producing city of Barrancabermeja, Colombia.

However, this clientelism and institutionalisation of local organisations did not negate the possibility for more radical action. On the contrary, the LPP also offered 'progressive actors [opportunities] to bring about social change' (Healy and Paulson 2000, 12). In defining a limited internal organisational form through legal mechanisms needed for recognition by the state, the LPP helped form strong institutionalised territorial grassroots organisations (Zibechi 2010a, 69), which gradually coalesced into 'infrastructures of class struggle' capable of maintaining prolonged protests (Webber 2011a, 309–310). This was the period when, in the words of CONALJUVE-president Benjamin Cáreces, social organisations 'woke up' and became a central political force.[74] Amongst the most important of these forces was the FEJUVE, enlivened and invigorated by the LPP, which was transformed from a neighbourhood collective into a distributor of state resources, a nexus of local power, a web of patronage and, vitally, at moments, an organ of class struggle in urban Bolivia (Lazar 2006, 186).

The Production of Neoliberal Space

The production of space by neoliberal reforms in Bolivia was no less dramatic than the changes neoliberalism enacted on the state or the class structure of the country. The miners were forced out of their isolated encampments to either the urban areas of El Alto, Cochabamba or Santa Cruz, or to frontier settlements in the Chapare and the department of Santa Cruz (Dunkerley 2007, 157, Nash 1992, 277). The government initially encouraged miners aged fifty to fifty-five to take 'voluntary retirement' (Gill 2000, 72). However, this option was only taken by a handful of workers, and the remaining miners and their families were eventually forced to accept a "re-location" package following their defeat at Calamarca and the abject conditions in the mining centres. The packages offered to the miners were hugely misleading, offering false promises of alternative employment that were rarely available for the miners in their new homes (Gill 2000, 73, Nash 1992, 279).

As well as displacing miners, neoliberal adjustment also forced peasant farmers off their land. In the *altiplano* regions of the departments of La Paz, Oruro and Potosí, peasant farmers were forced to compete with cheap agricultural imports made available through market liberalisation (Urioste and Kay 2005, 28), and rural

[74] Benjamin Cáreces, head of the CONALJUVE, interview, La Paz, 03/06/2016.

communities were hit hard by the combination of the opening up of Bolivia's economy to foreign imports, the reduction of labour rights of agricultural labourers, spending cuts to rural schools and a series of drought-induced crop failures (Nash 1992, 290). In the department of Santa Cruz, foreign capital—particularly from Brazil—increased mechanisation in soya production during the 1990s. Coupled with the increasing demand for land by agribusiness thanks to the soya boom, rural peasants were forced off their land driving processes of urbanisation in the city of Santa Cruz (Prado 2014, 13).

Rural migrants, along with the miners, came to Bolivian cities in droves, looking to waged work as part of their new livelihood strategies, driving the wave of proletarianisation described above. An estimated 100,000 people were displaced between 1987 and 1992, with 40 percent of these migrants coming to the axis cities of La Paz-El Alto, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz (Ledo 2002, cited in Torrico 2010, 25). El Alto grew by an average of 9.23 percent annually between 1976 and 1992 (Lazar 2008, 47) and was home to 647,000 *alteños* by 2001 (INE 2001). By 1988 the urban sprawl of El Alto had become large enough to warrant being a city with a separate municipal administration (Lazar, 2008, 47). The department of Santa Cruz, on the other hand, sustained the highest level of net migration in the country, rising from a total of 74,000 of the population born outside the department in 1976 to 428,000 in 2001 (Kirshner 2010b, 161), with the city of Santa Cruz growing to 1.1 million inhabitants (INE 2001).

Producing the Informalised City

The production of neoliberal space went beyond simply urbanisation, and encompassed the tracing of marginality, exclusion and integration into space itself (Arbona 2007, 130). Urbanisation under neoliberalism condensed pre-existing inequalities in space, whilst simultaneously deepening cleavages along the lines of class, race and gender (Arbona 2007, 131). The formation of El Alto as a separate municipality effectively concentrated the poverty of La Paz in the new, highly indigenous city (Albó 2006, 331–32), leading geographer Juan Arbona (2007, 128) to contend El Alto was comprised of 'a large population of the [social and economic] outcasts of neoliberal policies'. According to the 2001 census, access to basic services

was lower in El Alto than La Paz, and even the building materials that predominated in El Alto (adobe) reflected the deprivation of its residents (see table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Basic Services in the metropolitan region of La Paz (%)

	La Paz	El Alto	Santa Cruz
House made out of brick	53	22	93
House made out of adobe	46	77	1
Water service (in house)	65	35	51
Water service (out of house)	26	54	46
Households without access to basic services	16	37	5
Households with electricity	95	85	93

Source: INE 2001 and Arbona 2007, 132

The figures in table 3.3 do not reveal the same disparities for Santa Cruz, but only because Plan 3000 is not (yet) a separate municipality. However, fellow geographer Joshua Kirchner (2010a, 162) notes similar traces of inequality in space in Santa Cruz, with the 'marginal "satellite" cities on the southern and southeastern edges of the city, such as Plan 3000 [District 8] and Palmasola [District 9]' deprived of public services and cast as 'poor' and 'dangerous'. The vast majority of the housing without direct access to water (46 percent) and electricity (7 percent), not constructed out of brick (7 percent) are found outside the fourth ring of Santa Cruz.

The lack of infrastructure in these cities reveals the precarity in which most of the cities' poorer residents found themselves as a result of neoliberalism, and reflects the rapid nature of urbanisation with which the local municipal administration could not contend (Arbona 2007, 132). The migrants who came to Bolivian cities during this period did not find available housing on their arrival, and the cities of El Alto, La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz exploded through a complex mosaic of self-constructed neighbourhoods, forming an unplanned, organically developed *mancha urbana* (urban

stain).[75] In these areas (including Plan 3000, which was designated as a site for relocated residents after the 1983 flood of the River Piraí) residents worked together to build their homes, starting with simple constructions and adding rooms and upgrading materials as the years went by (Albó 2006, 333). Often land was occupied and construction rapid to stop eviction, or it was purchased off opportunistic *loteadores* (land speculators), who bought and sold undeveloped parcels of land—sometimes more than once—at astronomical prices (Albó 2006, 333, Goldstein 2004, 64). The titles exchanged were in many cases not recognised by the state, further marginalising the poorest urban residents who were cast as 'illegal' (Kirchner 2013, 547, Sandoval and Sostres 1989, 47). This denied inhabitants without recognised land titles access to schools and other public services, as well as to other citizenship rights, including the right to vote (Goldstein 2004, 118).

Once settled, residents formed *juntas vecinales* to pressure the state into providing absent public infrastructure, demanding the paving of roads and the provision of water and electricity, as well as recognition of the legality of their land titles (Sandoval and Sostres 1989, 78–80). Communal labour organised by the *juntas vecinales,* using kinship networks and community bonds, constructed public infrastructure, schools, sports fields and prepared pathways to be paved for roads (Goldstein 2004, 102–03, Lazar 2008, 66, Mamani 2005, 30). Indeed, the *juntas vecinales* and *juntas escalates* became the nodal points through which service provision and relations between residents of these communities and the state operated (Lazar 2008, 68). The newest migrants (found at the edge of the city), those with an extreme lack in basic services (e.g., water, electricity, asphalt) and therefore those with the greatest material needs were (and still are) the most active in their *juntas vecinales*, as participation brought recognition from local government, public provision of services and a palpable change in people's everyday lives (Linsalata 2010, 52).[76] The tension between the logics of production and social reproduction contained in self-construction of neighbourhoods by the working-classes produces a *spatial duality*, making liminal spaces like El Alto and Plan 3000 places of *radical*

[75] see Albó 2006, Arbona 2007, Arbona and Kohl 2004, Gill 2000, Lazar, 2008, Sandoval and Sostres 1989 for accounts of El Alto; Tasi 2010 for an account of La Paz, Goldstein 2004, 2016 for accounts of Cochabamba; Andia 2002, Kirchner 2010a, 2010b, 2013, Rojas Rosales 1988, Salek 2007 for accounts of Santa Cruz.
[76] Author interview with Marco Llanos 12/04/2016

potential during neoliberalism, albeit buried beneath the drudgery and hardship of everyday working-class lives in neoliberal cities.

Textures of Neoliberalism: Class, Gender and Ethnic Cleavages

The cleavages in space are also traced using other important divisions within Bolivian society. Although La Paz has a large Aymara population, El Alto is the 'Aymara capital' (Albó 2006, 334), with 74.2 percent of *alteños* over the age of 15 self-identifying with this indigenous group in the 2001 census (INE 2001). El Alto itself is divided approximately along ethnic lines, with the north of the city mainly Aymara *campesinos* and the South home to the city's 6.4 percent Quechua population (as well as the relocated miners who now live in Santiago II) (Sandoval and Sostres 1988, 35). The concentration of poverty in space is also, therefore, the condensing of differences between particular ethnic groups. It is a similar story in Santa Cruz, with the large majority of the Quechua and Aymara migrants (17.0 percent and 3.9 percent of the city's population respectively) found in the city's outskirts (INE 2001). The majority of Santa Cruz's migrants hail from the Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, and Potosí departments, and have settled in the fringes of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, in *barrios* like Plan 3000, which by 2001 had a population of 150,000 (Kirchner 2013, 547), over 40 percent of whom were born outside the department of Santa Cruz (Kirshner 2010a, 112).

The informal city and popular economy are also associated with indigenous people or *cholos*, who enter the public imaginary as the stereotypical market vendor (Lazar 2007, 2008, 17).[77] *Chola* street vendors sitting on the curb side by side selling basically the same produce, chatting away in Aymara or Quechua is a typical picture of life in Bolivian neoliberalised urban spaces. This visibility has provoked negative, at times racist, reactions from the *mestizo* elites in Bolivian cities. In Santa Cruz the '*mercadización'* (marketisation) of the city has been framed using 'terms like *invasión* [invasion] and *avasallamiento* [usurpation] of public space' (Andia 2002, 28, Kirshner 2010b, 157). Moreover, the 'cleanness' (both regarding dirt and the supposed 'purity'

[77] *Cholo/a* is an ethnocultural category used since colonial times to denote indigenous people in the city. However, they are not indigenous nor are they *mestizo*, they are betwixt, standing between indian/creole, rural/urban and commodity market/community (Lazar 2008, 17–18). See also Canessa (2012a), Seligmann (1989, 1993) and Weismantel (2001).

of the *criollo* elite) of *cruceño* modernity has been stressed to divide the residents of Santa Cruz into migrants and *cambas*. Popular *cholo* markets—indigenous spaces organised and occupied by highland migrants—are, through this paradigm, a contamination risk, with '*cruceños* [expressing] concern about… perceived filth, and unhygienic conditions caused by the expansion of these markets onto surrounding streets and open spaces' (Kirchner 2011, 99). Since colonial times indigenous people in the cities have been labelled *cholos* to separate them from the *mestizo* population, and *cholos* have long been considered 'unclean', 'dirty' and possessing 'excessive sexuality' (Lazar 2008, 17).[78] Indigeneity in cities thus is traced in space, most apparent in markets and the concentration of disparities present in cities, consequences of the unequal division of resources both by the state and through capitalist relations. The massive overlap between deprived areas and highly indigenous neighbourhoods also reveals the internally related nature of class and race.

Spatial textures also highlight the gendered dimension of class. Ironically, one of the lasting legacies of colonial gender hierarchies—in particular the inheritance of land through the male line—has been key to the social reproduction of migrants and their families in their new urban environments (Rivera 1996a, 169). Markets emerged as important points of social reproduction (as opposed to production), nodal points around which the 'informal city' revolve. One glance at the organisation of transport in Bolivian cities—unplanned, chaotic routes that pass from one centre of commerce to the next (Kirshner 2010b, 171)—reveals the centrality of informal markets and *callejeros* [street vendors] in the lives of poor urban residents. Horizontal networks of reciprocity, combined with more vertical kinship and guild organisational structures, have allowed women and their families to negotiate the lack of formal employment, available housing and access to credit to start work in the popular economy, and to establish themselves in cities (Lazar 2007, Rivera 1996a, 169–70). In urban centres, the lack of formal employment opportunities and the general levels of underemployment during neoliberalism pushed women into the labour market, increasing the number of economically active women by 170,000 between 1989 and 1995 (Arze and Maita 1999, 38). Women were mainly employed in domestic work

[78] As Kirshner (2010b, 183) has already underscored, these arguments mirror the more general observations of Mary Douglas (1966, 41), who argues dirt is 'matter out of place'.

(11.8 percent of total working women) or family firms (55.2 percent), and came to dominate the popular economy of markets and street vendors that grew at a phenomenal rate during this period (Rivera 1996a, 213).[79] Neoliberalism pushed vendors into increasingly informalised spaces, even encouraging traders in markets to leave their purpose built *puestos* (stalls) to compete for custom on the streets. Simultaneously, the epicentres of commerce today were consolidated: La Ceja and, every Thursday and Sunday, the enormous 16 de Julio (16 July) market in El Alto (Lazar 2008, 32); and Los Pozos, La Ramada, Barrio Lindo and La Mutualista (the first attempt to relocate Los Pozos) in Santa Cruz (Andia 2002, 26).

As Silvia Rivera (1996a, 170) underscores, however, there is no direct relation between women's increasingly active role in the EAP and social, economic or political power. The increased participation of women in the labour market represented more a feminization of poverty and work than the emancipation of migrant women (Rivera 1996b, 53), with *cholo-indio* women from the working-classes being confined to self-employment sectors such as commerce or domestic work (Rivera 1996b, 52). Employment did not offer women gratification, qualifications, nor the opportunity to improve their social standing. It simply provided a way to survive, through long, hard working days and was accompanied (in many cases) by the breakdown of the nuclear family and increasing domestic violence (Bastia 2011, 1521, Gill 2000, 75, Rivera 1996b, 26).

The LPP transformed the local level into a vital site of state formation and class formation, with the biggest challenges to neoliberalism emerging from these local levels (Arbona 2007, 129). As well as neoliberalism marking space, the city residents themselves transformed space to fit their own needs, leaving distinct traces in the poorer districts of cities as they both struggled against neoliberal changes and negotiated the cities they called home through pragmatic and at times incongruent quotidian practices and actions. At various times during the year—especially during the main carnivals in January/February (Oruro), April/May (Gran Poder), and August (the university *entrada*, literally entrance or parade)—the streets of El Alto, La Paz, Cochabamba, Plan 3000 and many other urban districts are transformed into the sites

[79] See Gill (1994) for an account of domestic labour during this period.

of celebration.[80] City streets become dance floors as residents parade through their neighbourhood clad in opulent outfits, with each dance addressing a different facet of Bolivia's history as an indigenous, mining country.[81] These dances are organised and paid for by *pasantes* (sponsors), who are usually connected to the local *junta vecinal*, in the case of local celebrations (Lazar 2008, 121), trade unions or to the *gremios* in the case of Gran Poder (Tassi 2010, 195). Festivals and dances mediate the articulation of rural inhabitants or ex-miners in urban spaces (Tassi 2010, 194), and represent the expression of new, urbanised forms of indigeneity (Tassi 2010, 192). These displays also contain aspects of contestation, imbuing the streets with a different logic to that of neoliberalism. In places were neighbourhood organisations have a heightened importance due to serious need, they also tend to perform leading roles in organising the local fiestas (Lazar 2008, 122). In particular, the radicalism of the miners—which June Nash (1993) shows can assume hybrid forms in particular contexts—and their organisational knowledge was transferred to the territorial organisations of the *juntas vecinales* as old trade union leaders formed the core of the neighbourhood organisations (Albó 2006, 338). The extent of this overlap between celebration and contestation is highlighted by the cheeky protest song '*¡Eso no es desfile, es marcha de protesta!*' [This is not a parade, it is a protest march!].[82] Some authors have called this new or insurgent citizenship, mapping out the ways that shantytown dwellers literally produce their citizenship, *autoconstrucción* (self-construction) (e.g., Holston 2008, Lazar 2008). As well as uncovering new forms of citizenship, I contend self-construction reveals the new textures of neoliberalism that has produced different forms of class struggle. Coupled with the decomposition of the traditional working-class base, it transformed the forms of class struggle found in neoliberal Bolivia and placed territorial organisation and the production of space at the heart of social conflicts (Torrico 2010, 20).

[80] Author's field notes. See Gill (2000) and Lazar (2008) for accounts of carnival in El Alto, Tasi (2010) for an account of Gran Poder, La Paz, and Goldstein (2004) for an account of Fiesta of San Miguel in the *barrio* of Villa Pagador, Cochabamba.
[81] See Nash (1993) for an excellent account of the significance of the dances and traditions, most of which originate from the carnival of Oruro.
[82] Author's field notes.

Conclusion

Neoliberalism in Bolivia has had a lasting impact on the country with a legacy that is still felt in the country today. Throughout its two phases it continually transformed the state, shifting from a state-led economy to a market-led economy and decentralising the state's administrative responsibilities even as the state's power at its centre in La Paz was consolidated. Decentralisation increased the presence of the state in civil society, giving municipalities increased responsibilities even as the democratic participation of the Bolivian population was severely limited.

At the same time, the deregulation of finance and the labour market, along with privatisation, galvanised intense processes of class decomposition and reformation. The miners ceased to have the political and economic importance assigned to them under the National Revolutionary State. Large scale public sector lay offs combined with the relocation of the miners radically altered the landscape of Bolivian political economy, with people forced into increasingly informalised and precarious forms of wage labour (more often than not disguised by family ties or self-exploitation to survive). Droughts in the western *altiplano*, coupled with the increased competition from a liberalised agricultural sector with little available credit, forced *campesinos* off their land and into the labour market, accompanied by women, who also joined the increasing ranks of labour.

These processes left deep scars in and transformed the textures of space beyond recognition. Proletarianisation was accompanied by urbanisation and peasants came to Bolivian urban areas—particularly La Paz/El Alto, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz—in huge numbers. New migrants found no new housing waiting for them and so built their own dwellings, collaborating with neighbours—often fellow migrants from the same community—to demand basic services from the state. This *autoconstrucción* equipped city-dwellers with the practical tools used in later struggles that exploded as the legitimacy of neoliberalism began to wane. Popular participation initiatives inadvertently created new spaces for radical change and new forms of class struggle that would further alter the historical trajectory of the country.

Chapter 4
Crisis and Social Movement Insurgency

By the late-1990s neoliberalism in Bolivia was entering into a severe economic, political and social crisis. It was a period of turmoil, upheaval and radical opportunity, which witnessed a zenith in the intellectual production of the country, with the intellectual collective La Comuna, formed by Álvaro García Linera, Luis Tapia, Raúl Prada and Raquel Gutiérrez, leading the way (Hylton and Thomson 2007, 157). Given the excitement around this period and its lasting ramifications, it has already been the focus of much scholarship, framed through lenses including previous revolutions (Dunkerley 2007), social movements (Linsalata 2010, Mamani 2005, Webber 2011b), memory (Iamamato 2015), synchronism and diachronism of long- and short-histories (Hylton and Thomson 2007) and citizenship (Lazar 2008, Postero 2007).

There are three tasks that I will undertake in this chapter that move beyond the existing literature. Firstly, I will explore how a crisis of the state catalysed a cycle of urban and rural struggle, tracing the dynamics of the Pink Tide through its first phase. The chapter addresses the moment of catharsis and thus largely focuses on subaltern radicalism in El Alto and the surrounding *altiplano*, a reasonable focal point given the centrality of the city in the decisive moments of struggle in October 2003 and May-June 2005. I will also examine the muted protests in the city of Santa Cruz and its surrounding, as well as the emergent autonomist movement of the *cruceña* bourgeoisie. The production of the space of 'two Bolivias' both by Aymara activists in the *altiplano* and right-wing activists in Santa Cruz is vital if we are to understand the dynamics of the first term of the MAS (2006–2009) and the everyday relations found within the *barrio* Plan 3000. I argue that protests against municipal taxation revealed the relationship between the increasingly acute crisis of neoliberalism and its effects on social reproduction, which when coupled with state violence, sparked a mass movement comprised of a broad alliance of peasants and the urban working-classes. The social movement frame of the nationalisation of gas then put this coalition of social forces in motion against state power.

Secondly, I will tackle the role of FEJUVE-El Alto in the struggles of 2003–2005 and seek to explain how and why it was transformed from a clientelist network at the boundary of state and civil society into an infrastructure of class struggle. I argue that

the crisis of liberal democracy and the Bolivian party system opened up an autonomous space which allowed the FEJUVE-El Alto to be radicalised and directed from below. The leadership was freed from patrimonial relations with political parties and was able to use the FEJUVE-El Alto infrastructure to not only sustain but also amplify the protests during October 2003.

Thirdly, I discuss how these movements fed into the first government of Evo Morales and the changing nature of state-society relations in this context. Despite the undoubted political significance of the Second Gas War of May-June 2005, it is not treated here in great detail as my focus is the rise of the MAS and the ways in which it began to dominate the politics of the Bolivian Left and increasingly came under its influence social movements. To this end, I distinguish between three dimensions of transformism in this context: (1) co-optation from above; (2) the creation of parallel social organisations by the government; and (3) the propensity of social organisations to be co-opted. The chapter thus traces the ebbs and flows of social struggle by social organisations and the shifting alliances and forms of state-society relations during the revolutionary cycle (2000–2005) and into the first term of Evo Morales (2006–2009).

A Dual Crisis of the state

The GDP-growth that had sustained Sánchez de Lozada's reforms through the mid-1990s came to an abrupt halt in 1999, as the 'contradictions in neoliberal capitalism at the global, regional, and national levels struck Bolivia hard' (Webber 2011b, 143). Financial crises spread across the region in the wake of the Asian and Russian crises, hitting Brazil and Argentina the strongest (Spronk and Webber 2014, 7). These crises affected Bolivia badly, both because agribusiness in the eastern lowlands had attracted significant Brazilian investment, and because Argentina and Brazil were the main export markets for Bolivian gas. Consequently, annual growth rates fell from 4.6 percent between 1993 and 1997 to below 2 percent between 1999 and 2001 (see table 4.1). The growth rate of 0.1 percent in the hydrocarbons sector placed particular strain on the Bolivian economy, as hydrocarbons comprised roughly half of legal exports (Webber 2011b, 143).

Table 4.1: Nominal GDP Growth by Economic Sector (%)

Year	1989-1992	1993-1997	1999-2001
Economic Sector			
GDP	3.9	4.6	1.5
GDP (Basic Prices)	3.8	4.6	1.8
1. Agriculture	2.2	4.7	3.2
2. Extractivism	6.4	4.1	0.1
3. Manufacturing Industries	4.4	4.6	2.5
4. Utilities	5.8	8.7	2.4
5. Construction	6.4	5.4	-9.3
6. Commerce	5.3	4.0	1.4
7. Transport, Alimentation and Communications	6.1	6.5	1.5
8.Financial Products, Insurance, Real Estate, Lending Services	3.2	7.5	4.3
9. Communal, Domestic and Personal Services	3.9	4.0	3.7
10. Hotels and Restaurants	4.3	2.8	2.7
11. Public Administration	1.3	2.9	2.1

Source: Adapted from INE 2018

Bolivia has South America's second largest gas reserves, and privatisation of state hydrocarbons firm YPFB through the 1994 Law of Capitalisation, when coupled with the reduction of wellhead royalties through 1996 hydrocarbons law (Law 1731), represented a massive loss for the Bolivian treasury. Researcher Claire McGuigan (2007, 50) estimates that the benefits of the privatisation of YPFB to the Bolivian economy between 1999 and 2004 (US$2.1 billion) are outweighed by the massive costs and revenues foregone in the hydrocarbons sector (US$2.2 billion). YPFB provided more to the treasury coffers in the six-years previous to privatisation (US$1.8 billion) than private firms did through taxation in the six-years following the reforms (US$1.2 billion), even before the cost of reform has been factored in (McGuigan 2007, 52). Moreover, YPFB was on the brink of completing a pipeline linking the Bolivian gas fields to the large markets of Brazil and Argentina, a move that Kohl (2004, 904) estimates 'could have increased profits by at least $50 million a year for 40 years'.

This differential in state revenue placed increasing burden on the treasury. The Bolivian state's budget-borrowing increased from 3.3 percent of Gross National Income (GNI) in 1997, to 8.6 percent of GNI in 2003 (Webber 2011b, 143), and the government was increasingly forced to borrow to balance the budget sheet leading to a fiscal crisis.

The Start of the Insurrectionary Cycle: The Water War

The first articulation of the social forces that emerged during this period was in Cochabamba during January-April 2000, when a coalition of left-indigenous social forces rose up in protest against the privatisation of water. SEMAPA, the public water company in Cochabamba, was bought by a transnational consortium led by US-giant Bechtel, Aguas del Tunari, which shifted the cost of privatisation onto poor working-class and peasant consumers through price hikes (Spronk and Webber 2007, 39).[83] Privatisation was accompanied by Law 2029, 'which granted monopoly rights over water sources to private companies' and effectively commodified water, forcing all users into contracts for the provision of water (Spronk 2007, 14).

The subsequent victory for social movements—the reversal of the privatisation plan—was a pivotal moment for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was the first victory for left-indigenous forces in the country since the beginning of neoliberalism, a period of historic defeat for popular social forces in Bolivia (Webber 2011b, 149). Secondly, privatisation was framed by social movement actors as a violation of their *usos y costrumbres* (customary practices), as the commodification of resources was linked to the undermining of indigenous ways of life (Webber 2011b, 149). Through these first struggles, the unjust nature of neoliberalism was linked to the colonial injustices of the state itself and to indigenous practices of social reproduction (Gutiérrez 2014). Thirdly, the Water War set the precedent for decision-making through public assemblies, known as *cabildos*, of between 50,000 and 70,000 people facilitated by social movement leaders (Albro 2006, 388). The *cabildos* placed direct democracy at the heart of social movements and further undermined the liberal democracy of the state (Lewis and Olivera 2004, 38). Fourthly, the events of April 2000 produced a new social fabric that used space in a new, innovative way. Public space (rather than the state)

[83] '"Market regulation" had meant that water constituted a quarter (US$15) of household budgets for people earning minimum wage (US$60), and in some cases it rose to as much as 100 percent' (Hylton and Thomson 2007, 103).

became the site of deliberation and decision-making, and the streets—themselves constructed in part by urban residents through their neighbourhood councils—became integral to social movement struggles. Finally, because the provision of water affected both rural and urban residents, the Water War produced the first embryonic alliances between urban trade unions, coca growing peasants and irrigators, as table 4.2 demonstrates. The disciplined and cohesive presence of the *cocaleros*, led by Evo Morales, was significant in the Water War (García Linera et al. 2004), and many coca-farmers in the Chapare had links to the metropolitan area of Cochabamba (which also includes neighbouring Sacaba).[84] The articulation of rural and urban social forces was a principal dynamic of this period of revolt.

Table 4.2: Cochabamba Water War, January–April 2000

Infrastructure/Forces	**Grievances**	**Demands**	**Protest-Repertoires**
Co-ordinadora (Leadership – Oscar Olivera and Omar Fernández) Federation of Factory Workers of Cochabamba (Fabriles) Federación de Maestros Urbanos de Cochabamba, Urban Teachers' Federation of Cochabamba CSFTC (Leadership - Evo Morales) COD-Cochabamba Urban Teachers' Federation Residents of peripheral urban slums/poor water-consumers Street Kids International Activists	Accumulated social consequences of neoliberalism State-repression Water privatisation Violation of *usos y costumbres*	Reversal of water-privatisation Alternative to neoliberalism Constituent assembly Deepening of democracy in all sphere of social life	Street-Clashes with armed forces and police Mass assemblies Road-Blocks Mass occupations of public space Marches

Source: Webber 2011b, 152

[84] See Shakow (2014) for a detailed description of the intertwined relations between the coca growing region of the Chapare and Sacaba.

The Water War, argue Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson (2005, 49), 'provided a dress rehearsal at municipal level of the nationwide drama of October 2003'. Privatisation provoked reactions from social movements, which used the historic injustices of colonialism and the recent neoliberal period, as well as indigenous practices, to frame their struggles. In this context the economic crisis of neoliberalism quickly became a social and political crisis, with the implementation of austerity measures on the general population galvanising widespread resistance.

Rural Uprisings and the Politicisation of Ethnic Cleavages

By April 2000, the protesters in Cochabamba had also been joined by Aymara activists on the *altiplano* in the department of La Paz (Gutiérrez 2014, 29). This marked the start of a period of unrest in the rural areas around Lake Titicaca and the cities of La Paz and El Alto, which ebbed and flowed between September 2000 and September 2003. During this period Aymara activists in Omasuyos in the department of La Paz, led by the CSUTCB, organised the most effective blockades since November 1979 against the commodification of water, coca and land. They demanded the rights and recognition of Aymara communities that still exhibited a degree of autonomy from the state (Auza 2004, cited in Gutiérrez 2014, 44, Hylton and Thomson 2007, 104). The *cocaleros*, who were engaged in violent struggles against US-funded drug eradication programmes, were also another principal social force during this period, suffering violence at the hands of the military and the police (Ledebur 2002).

The actions of social movements during this period of Bolivian history, as Hylton and Thomson (2005, 41) contend, were not inevitable results of neoliberalism, and 'can only be understood within the context of the country's distinctive insurrectionary traditions of the past 200 years'. Raquel Gutiérrez (2014, 29) stresses the complexity of the political struggles that swept across the *altiplano* during this period. Indigenous communities on the Bolivian *altiplano* are organised into socio-economic and socio-political units called *ayllus* and *markas*. The alternative 'lifeworlds' found in *ayllus* and *markas* imbue political and sociological interactions with multiple meanings that, Gutiérrez (2014, 29) argues, 'require additional cultural considerations'. This was not only a fight against neoliberalism (although this may have been the central conjunctural dynamic) but something much greater, encompassing struggles for the

defence of Aymara communities in the face of encroaching state and market forces (through a culmination of e.g., the implementation of Law INRA, the privatisation of water, coca eradication, and timber laws).

Fellow Comuna member Luis Tapia (2011, 12) has provided a cartography of the social terrain over which these movements operated. Tapia argues that social relations are configured in ways that reproduce a hierarchical historical base articulated in everyday interactions, meaning that the social cleavages opened by colonialism and capitalism continue to influence both everyday practices of Bolivian society and broader political projects. There are three central cleavages in Tapia's analysis—colonial/national, socioeconomic, and ideological/cultural—which are politicised or depoliticised at different intensities depending on the context. One of the central tenets of neoliberalism in Bolivia, as discussed in the last chapter, was a full frontal attack on working-class organisation, and the depoliticisation of the old socioeconomic axis of class as conflicts around accumulation and exploitation were recast as technical issues to be tackled by bureaucrats (Tapia 2011, 24). After the implementation of neoliberal multiculturalism through the LPP by the first Sánchez de Lozada presidency, governments attempted to contain the tensions within Bolivian society through an explicitly ethnic-cultural cleavage. However, as the widespread protests of the CSUTCB and the *cocaleros* demonstrate, social movements were able to politicise the ethnic-cultural cleavage, linking historic colonial oppression with the contemporary dynamics of capitalist development within Bolivia (Tapia 2011, 27).[85]

Struggles in the *altiplano* by Aymara groups were thus a historical response to a particular configuration of colonial/national, socioeconomic and ideological/cultural cleavages at that moment. The CSUTCB in particular came to understand the state during this period as 'colonial, capitalist and neoliberal' (García et al., 2014, 203). Its leader Felipe Quispe [*el mallku*] began to speak 'of "two Bolivias", one indigenous the other *q'ara*,[86] or non-Indian', an idea which 'circulated not only within rapidly

[85] See McNelly (2017, 438) for the role of these cleavages in catharsis, the first stage of passive revolution.

[86] *Q'ara* is how indigenous people refer to the racial category of non-indigenous. It literally means 'stripped or bear' and emphasises how non-indigenous peoples are stripped of the culture and alienated from their community. 'In other words', Canessa (2012a, 6) states, '[q'ara] are stripped of their humanity'.

radicalized Aymara circles, but also through civil society' (Hylton and Thomson 2005, 50).[87]

Quipse's strategy of dividing the country along ethnic lines had reverberations around the country, and had a large impact in eastern departments of the so-called 'media luna' (half-moon): Beni, Pando, Santa Cruz and Tarija (Dunkerley 2007, 16). The growing strength of indigenous groups provoked a violent reaction from the white-*mestizo cruceña* elite, who were alarmed at the prospect of losing the economic and political privileges historically bestowed upon their class and race (Plata 2008, 102). Two distinct political projects—traced in space as the division between east and west—thus emerged from this context:

> one that want[ed] to constitute Bolivia through the presence of the indigenous majority, with the constitution of a plurinational state; and the other of the *cruceña* elite, which postulate[d] autonomous departments and, within their radical sectors, the ethnic reinvention of the "Nación Camba" (Camba Nation) (Plata 2008, 102).[88]

The Nación Camba movement was the most extreme voice within the autonomous movement, proposing a 'peaceful' separation of the country through a 'freely associated state' (Sivak 2007, 26). This proposal had administrative and economic dimensions, and demanded each department have the ability to manage its natural resources and its own tax system (Sivak 2007, 27). Complementing Nación Camba were a number of powerful interrelated groups: the unelected Comité Pro Santa Cruz (Pro-Santa Cruz Committee, CPSC), led by business and agroindustrial elites; the Cámara de Industria, Comercio, Servicios y Turismo (Chamber of Industry, Commerce, Services and Tourism, CAINCO); and the Unión Juvenil Cruceñista (Cruceño Youth Union, UJC), the violent proto-fascist youth wing of the CPSC (Sivak 2007, 29).

[87] The notion of 'two Bolivias' was present in Katarismo and stretches back beyond Quispe; however, he gave the idea new political significance during this period.

[88] 'Camba', a term thought to have originated from the Guaraní word for friend, was first used to describe peasants and was synonymous with the peons tied to large *haciendas* through debt. Over time, it came to encompass both peasants and landowners from the eastern part of the country (Stearman 1985, 20).

Influencing National Politics: Moving into the Urban Arena

The articulation of rural with urban was a key dynamic in the social movements 2000–2005, and one which set this period apart from much of Bolivian history. After rural mobilisations in the departments of La Paz by the CSUTCB and of Cochabamba by the *cocaleros*, it was the blockage of *urban space* in El Alto during October 2003 that turned out to be decisive. In September 2003, two peasant marches arrived in La Paz (Patzi 2003, 239), with a faction initiating a hunger-strike in the Aymara-language radio station San Gabriel in El Alto (Webber 2011b, 206). This hunger strike would continue a month, but it was only through the passing of the protagonism of struggle from the *campesinos* to the urban *alteños* at the end of September 2003 that a political challenge to the state emerged.[89] Why October 2003 was so decisive is complicated, and there are a number of factors that dovetailed in the period leading up to the Gas War (also known as Black October). The Gas War emerged from the local struggles against municipal tax legislation in El Alto, the CSUTCB struggles during September and protests against the proposal to export Bolivian natural gas through Chilean seaports. The *alteño* population was mobilised from mid-September onwards, when the FEJUVE-El Alto initiated an indefinite blockade against the Maya and Paya ('one' and 'two' in Aymara) municipal tax. The COB, already vocal supporters of the mobilisations, joined the fray with an indefinite strike at the end of September. Miners from the mining centre Huanuni arrived in El Alto at the beginning of October to participate in the protests, which were by this time a daily occurrence. The arrival of the miners coincided with the third civic strike in El Alto. By the fourth day of the civic strike La Paz had effectively run out of gas, and the government issued a state of emergency. Simultaneously, downtown Cochabamba was shutdown by the Coordinadora and the *cocaleros*. The powder keg exploded on 11 October when the military tried to force a caravan of gas tankers through El Alto from the depot in Senkata to the La Paz-El Alto highway, leaving scores dead. By the end of the Gas War, as table 4.3 demonstrates, two social blocs comprised of alliances from across the social spectrum in Bolivia had emerged, with some actors—including the MAS led by Evo Morales—oscillating between the two positions.

[89] Benjamin Cáreces, head of the CONALJUVE, interview, La Paz, 03/06/2016.

Table 4.3: Social Blocs and Political Polarisation, 2003–2005

Eastern-bourgeois bloc *Social forces* CPSC Civic Committees – Tarija, Pando, Beni FEPB-SC CAO Cattle-Ranchers' Federation Hydrocarbons-Chamber CAINCO Finance, agro-industrial, petroleum-capital	**Left-indigenous bloc** *Social forces* FEJUVE-El Alto COR-El Alto COB FSTMB Rural and urban teachers FSTCLP-TK CSUTCB (Quispe) Coordinator of Gas (Olivera) Overwhelmingly indigenous working-classes and peasantry	**Oscillating actors** *Social forces* Carlos Mesa MAS Middle Class CSUTCB (Loayza) *Cocaleros*
January Agenda Departmental autonomy Regional control over natural resources Departmental control over most tax-revenue Departmental authority over all policies excluding defence, currency, tariffs, and foreign relations 'Free-market' capitalism Openness to foreign direct investment Racism toward indigenous majority State-repression against left-indigenous protesters	*October Agenda* Nationalisation of natural gas Revolutionary Constituent Assembly Resignation of Carlos Mesa Indigenous liberation from internally colonial race- relations Nationalisation and social/ workers' control over natural resources and strategic industries Radical redistribution of wealth and land	*Mixed Agenda* *Carlos Mesa* Initial rhetorical support for October Agenda shifts to right-wing discourse against left-indigenous bloc by March 2007 Continuous practical support for perpetuation of neoliberal development model *Middle Class* Follow Mesa as he shifts right *MAS* Support for Mesa government until March 2005 Subsequent support for modest reformism Increase to 50 per cent royalties in hydrocarbons tax regime (against nationalisation) Support for non-revolutionary Constituent Assembly

Source: Webber 2011b, 233

State violence was undoubtedly a vital mobilising factor. The attack on Aymara protesters in the town of Warisata (near Lake Titicaca) in mid-September which left 5 dead (Iamamato 2015, 116), and later the massacre of *alteños* by the military responsible for over 70 deaths were the sparks that mobilised the struggles of October 2003 (Ramos Andrade 2004). 100,000 people marched to La Paz on 13 October, and again on 16 October. By this time marches and protests had emerged in solidarity across the country. Sánchez de Lozada resigned on 17 October upon hearing that 58 trucks of miners were let through a military check-point at Patacamaya (some 100

kilometres from La Paz), with an estimated 400,000 people occupying the streets of La Paz, (Dunkerley 2007, 12).

Anthropologist Sian Lazar (2006, 185), who has produced some of the richest thick descriptions of quotidian life in El Alto, argues that the events of 2003 represented a mutation of the '"normal" democratic cycle of protest—negotiation—agreement—government reneging on its promises—renewed protest' of the city, a deviation caused by the state-violence. The events of October 2003, mere weeks after her time in El Alto, surprised Lazar, in large part because she explained away changes in *alteño* consciousness through her personal interactions with the city and its residents as an ethnographer, attributing the growing political radicalism of *alteños* to the fact that she 'was spending more of [her] time with people who had chosen to take an active part in the city's politics' (Lazar 2008, 20). This left Lazar unable to interpret the events of the Gas War and the rapidly changing political horizons of the subjects of her study. Lazar returned to El Alto in early 2004 to discover what had happened during the Gas War, and asserts in her 2008 book *El Alto: Rebel City* that many factors, including the demise of patronage with political parties, radicalism in the face of economic hardship, and long-term 'processes of identification with the countryside and the construction of a collective sense of self' led to the events of Black October (Lazar 2008, 258). However, whilst Lazar contends the political expression of these factors was within the realms of normality, I argue that in order to understand the political dynamics in El Alto today we must frame this moment as a distinctly *unusual* context, where social actors came to possess radical subjective horizons that surpassed the state, capitalism and the political program eventually implemented by the MAS government.

The Radical Potential of the Liminal City

The nature of urban space in El Alto proved to be particularly influential during the protests of 2003. Not only has El Alto been self-constructed by newly proletarianised migrants and ex-miners, leaving remnants of the processes of class formation etched in urban space, it also sits above the city of La Paz. Three out of the four routes into La Paz in the bowl below pass through El Alto, giving the city and its residents unique power to lay siege to the seat of government (Harvey 2012, 145). It is also a liminal space, sitting betwixt the rural and the urban, with many residents during the 1990s

and early-2000s visiting their communities in the *altiplano* regularly (Rivera 1996a).[90] As essentially one large marketplace, El Alto is where the rural economy meets the urban consumer, a vital nexus of exchange (Rivera 1996, Seligmann 1989, 698-703). The *cholo* residents of El Alto are neither indigenous nor *criollo* and the city also straddles (and defies) the boundary between the formal and informal city (Risør 2016, 337). And vitally, as Sue Iamamoto (2015, 130–31) stresses, El Alto

> also mediates between the state and the rest of the country, the "nation". Therefore, El Alto not only raised the demands and expectations of indigenous people in Bolivia, but it also—and more importantly—embodied one of the most rooted and unfulfilled promises of the Bolivian nation: socioeconomic development.

Migration flows under neoliberalism moved the site of Bolivia as a nation into an urban space, as the country's predominant groups and classes came in swathes to cities, including El Alto. And through its political and social dynamics, El Alto became a trope for the nation itself, the place where national demands—the recuperation of hydrocarbons, of natural resources, of sovereignty itself—were made (Prado 2003, 42-43).

In the previous chapter I underscored the *duality of space* produced by self-construction and the liminality of El Alto. This duality leads El Alto to be city with radical potential. Class struggle has the potential to intensify the contradictions between processes of social reproduction and production, disrupting the logic of capital accumulation. Moreover, liminality opens up space to 'do something different' (Harvey 2012, xvii), a 'position that fosters human agency' (Iamamoto 2015, 130). Iamamoto (2015, 130) has already noted how *chola* market women disrupt predominant gender stereotypes in Bolivia and *alteños* are known for their strong, no-nonsense attitude.[91] This 'doing something different' can be a small subversion of daily practices, tiny changes that are not immediately obvious, and are more often than not buried under the weight of social necessity in a poor, marginalised city. This is part of the reason why Lazar (2008) missed the radical potential of the city of El Alto during neoliberalism, when the rich social fabric and practices contained in the everyday lives of the working-classes in El Alto formed the basis for social movements that took advantage of the

[90] We have to be careful not to overplay this interdependence of rural and urban, which came to be an assumed characteristic of the city even whilst, as recent CEDLA research shows, this dynamic started to change (see Escóbar de Pabón et al. 2015).
[91] Author's field notes.

emerging crisis of the state from above. It also helps explain why there were radical spaces hidden amongst the hopelessness captured by Lesley Gill's (2000) ethnography of the city during the 1990s, and how radical ideas spread through socioeconomic and ethnic cleavages. This radicalisation occurred both through the daily practices, interactions and exchanges, and through moments where class struggle and the crisis of the state exploded and became visible for all to see.

Linking the Lived Experience of Class with Neoliberalism

One of the contributing factors leading to the Gas War, I contend, was the role that struggles against the decreasing quality of life—struggles for rights to education, against increased taxes, frustration directed at representatives of neoliberalism—played in revealing the connection between systemic processes and the lived experience of class. Towards the end of the millennium, after years of abandonment by the state and enduring the harsh day-to-day realities of life in El Alto, residents began to organise to demand an autonomous university (Albó 2006, 340). Education was, as mentioned in the previous chapter, seen as a way out of poverty for many, and parents worked hard to send their children to university (Albó 2006, 340). By the late-1990s, the lack of university places available for *alteños* at the local-state Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (University of San Andrés, UMSA) provoked a reaction from the city's youth, who demanded educational opportunities. The government began to discuss establishing a university in the city, whilst students and professors started organising courses independently, with (some claim) tens-of-thousands of students registering for a public university in El Alto (Lazar 2008, 52). In May 2000 a group of students occupied the technical annex of UMSA in Villa Esperanza (El Alto), and, in response, the government announced the formation of the Universidad Pública Autónoma de El Alto (Autonomous Public University of El Alto, UPEA), which was granted autonomous status in 2003 (Lazar 2008, 52).

The formation of UPEA was a sign that a change was underway in El Alto. Abraham Mansilla, a student leader at the time, argues 'UPEA is a product of racial exclusion from the public university' UMSA.[92] By the time the cycle of protests had started across Bolivia, *alteños* were already drawing connections between quotidian

[92] A.D. Mansilla, student activist during the formation of UPEA and Aymara scholar, interview, La Paz, 25/09/2016, my emphasis.

experiences of poverty, exclusion and class, and wider historical dynamics of the Bolivian state. Anthropologist Xavier Albó (2006, 341) contends that El Alto is unique exactly because of the strength of indigenous identities amongst the *alteño* youth (now mixed with western cultures, including hip-hop, breakdancing and skateboarding) and the pride they had at being (in particular) Aymara.[93] The indigenous face of El Alto during this period became, as in the rural protests discussed above, increasingly politicised.

In February 2003 the cycle of protest notched up a gear when the Sánchez de Lozada government announced an IMF-dictated 12.5 percent increase of tax on monthly salaries over US$110 (Hylton and Thomson 2007, 108, Mamani 2005, 42). On February 12 the police's Special Group marched peacefully on the presidential palace, only to be met by state violence administered through the shots of the military police in Plaza Murillo. The resulting state repression killed 34 people and injured a further 205 (Schultz 2005, 29). High school students, university students from UPEA, the formal and informal working-classes and residents of the cities of El Alto and La Paz took to the streets and, taking advantage of the lack of police presence, attacked symbols of neoliberalism: the headquarters of the three main neoliberal parties (MNR, MIR, ADN), supermarkets, ATMs, the water company Aguas de Illimani, Banco Sol bank and the mayor's office (Hylton 2003, Patzi 2003, 233). These protests spread quickly across the country, and there were smaller-scale protests in the cities of Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Trinidad, Oruro and Sucre (Webber 2011b, 177).

For some (e.g., Farthing and Kohl 2006, 86–87, Lazar, 2006, 196), this was random looting and rioting. However, the *impuestazo* (big tax protest) cannot be understood outside the context of worsening of the material conditions of the working-classes in already impoverished cities, the decline in the legitimacy of the neoliberal model and its associated political parties, and the increased political radicalism accumulated over the previous three years of struggles.[94] Although spontaneous and unorganised, these were protests that represented the direct reaction of the population to increasingly visible injustices.[95] The anti-neoliberal facet of these protests was

[93] I also made similar observations during my fieldwork, particular pertaining to CONAMAQ's initiative in El Alto/La Paz, the *ayllu urbano* (urban *ayllu*) (author's field notes).
[94] Hylton and Thomson (2005, 51–52), Ichuta (2008, 139) and Webber (2011b, 179) share this assessment.
[95] Carlos Roja, member of the FEJUVE 2003, interview, El Alto, 11/05/2016.

confirmed the following day when protesters took over the bottling plants of Coca-Cola and Pepsi in El Alto (Hylton 2003).

By the 18 February Sánchez de Lozada had restored order, repealing the tax and replacing his cabinet, but not before the erosion of state legitimacy had been laid bare for all to see (Hylton and Thomson 2005, 53). The *impuestazo* revealed both the weakness of the state in this moment and the historic injustice faced by the people of El Alto. Neoliberalism had forced an increasing number of Bolivians into cities, and massive processes of proletarianisation made precarious forms of wage-labour the *modus operandi* for survival and a vital part of social reproduction. In this context activists began coupling the decreasing quality of everyday life and regressive taxation imposed upon the general population with the neoliberal changes enacted through privatisation. Simultaneously, the struggles around social reproduction became gradually politicised, as dependence on the market for basic goods and services tied worsening social conditions to government reforms.

The *impuestazo* thus offers a snapshot of the growing critical consciousness during this period, as deteriorating living conditions were connected to neoliberal reforms. Protests against rising taxes became lightening rods for discontent, and concrete forms of struggle through which *alteños* began to connect the dots between disparate processes.

These connections became evermore evident during September 2003, when the mayor of El Alto, José Luis Paredes, proposed the Maya and Paya legislation, designed to increase municipal taxes on building and home-construction. The FEJUVE-El Alto and the Central Obrera Regional de El Alto (Regional Workers' Central El Alto, COR-El Alto) led a civic strike in El Alto in protest, blocking streets in all nine districts of the city (Webber 2011b, 206). A second, indefinite strike was called for the 15 September, forcing the mayor to cancel the initiative, but not before the city had been set in motion and the horizons of protesters had moved beyond the specific issue of Maya and Paya (Iamamoto 2015, 113). In the popular memory of the period in El Alto, the protests against the Maya and Paya have been linked to inequality and the growing popular consciousness of *alteños*, who saw the municipal taxes as an attempt to 'collect more money at the expense of the people'.[96] The poverty of the state and state-service provision in the city at the time led *alteños* to view taxes as a

[96] Lucho Zapata, leader of FEJUVE-El Alto, interview, El Alto, 26/04/2016.

drain on people's resources, an expense that does not reap dividends for the population of El Alto, a position that Jorge Villca, a leader within the 2016 FEJUVE-El Alto, suggests points to the possible rise in taxes as a key moment:

> The problem with these Maya and Paya taxes proposed by Pepe Lucho [José Luis Paredes]… was the tax charged citizens a lot of money to raise municipal resources. [The municipal government] had already taken from the pocket of the people, from poor people who had no money, who did not have any work because during this time it was very difficult to find employment. Our country's exports were completely dead, we could not export anything, we could not consolidate [the economy].[97]

Jorge Villca's account is indicative of the ways in which increasing numbers of *alteños* connected the proposed Maya and Paya taxes with the rising inequality—and the broader political economic context more generally—that had become ever more visible during the previous two decades in El Alto. In the popular imaginary, taxes were paid by the poor to aid the rich, not vice versa. The class component of neoliberalism, as a project to restore bourgeois power, was revealed through its inability to promote the promised economic growth and neoliberal governments' unwillingness to tax multinational business above the poor people of El Alto.

Gas, Nationalism and Memories of the Pacific War

We have already seen that the politicisation of ethnic cleavages was necessary but insufficient to explain the Gas War. Likewise, growing political consciousness visible in moments of struggle against proposed tax hikes connected the everyday class practices with macro-processes, but it alone was insufficient to produce the cross sectoral alliances seen in 2003 (see table 4.3). Protests over water in Cochabamba, and the blockades across the *altiplano*, whilst symbolically important, did not affect the political economy of the country as a whole. However, the politicisation of the issue of exporting gas to Mexico through Chilean seaports placed the political economy of neoliberalism at the heart of protests—in particular the privatisation of gas and the 1997 hydrocarbons law—challenging the material basis of the neoliberal state (Spronk and Webber 2007).

[97] Jorge Villca, a leader in the FEJUVE-El Alto, interview, El Alto, 21/04/2016.

Political scientists Susan Spronk and Jeffery Webber (2007, 40) contend that because of the salience of natural gas in industrial production—and in turn its importance to the capitalist world market and the Bolivian state—political struggles around natural gas had a more macro frame and political context which encompassed more disparate groups, helping to build alliances between class fractions and across classes, in this case between the peasantry and the urban working-classes (see table 4.3). The Gas War was framed through a historic injustice—the loss of the Bolivian seacoast during an 'illegal' war with Chile (the Pacific War 1879–1883)—helping to unify protestors through demands for the nationalisation of gas for the good of the Bolivian nation.[98] According to CEDLA economist Carlos Arze, the plan was to allow the sale of gas at approximately US$0.18 per thousand cubic feet, a twentieth of the price of US$3.50–US$4.00 commanded in California (cited in Dangl 2008, 121). Bolivia was only to profit from the measly tax income recouped at the first stage of the process, leaving many Bolivians feeling that historic injustices were repeating themselves. As the comments of Carlos Rojas, a leader of the 2003 FEJUVE-El Alto, illustrate, the issue of national gas managed to capture the indignation felt by the subaltern classes (both rural and urban) in Bolivia at the time:

> They told us that from the moment the petroleum left the wellhead we were no longer its owners. The transnational companies were absolute owners and we were only owners of the resource in the ground. All of this combined at different levels, starting the discussion [over natural resources].[99]

The exportation of natural gas through Chilean seaports became considered symptomatic of the historic injustices face by the Bolivian people, which included: the loss of natural resources to foreign imperial/colonial resources; Chile industrialising (again) at the expense of Bolivia; and growing social inequality inside the country because the majority of Bolivians do not benefit from their country's resources (Iamamoto 2015, 115). The head of the COR-El Alto stated that 'gas will be the mother of all battles, if the *gringo* government insists on selling off our hydrocarbons at the price of a dead chicken', whilst Evo Morales said: 'If Goni decides to give gas away to

[98] See Iamamoto (2015) for a detailed discuss on the importance on the memory of the Pacific War in the Gas War.
[99] Carlos Rojas,11/05/2016.

Chile this government will not last 24 hours. We are going to strike and blockade until we recover the gas' (both cited in Webber 2011b, 215).

It is no surprise, then, that this became the major frame of the protests in 2003, nor that local protests against taxation, once synchronised with these broader concerns, could not be stopped at the local level. Activists in this scenario swiftly moved from a conjunctural analysis of events to structural explanations through these struggles, as Carlos Barrera, another FEJUVE-El Alto leader in 2003, explains:

> In the end we understood that the problem is not one of conjuncture but a structural problem, that [neoliberalism] is causing a profound structural change. So before 2003 there were big mobilizations such as the Water War in Cochabamba, *el Mallku* [Felipe Quispe and the CSUTCB in the *altiplano*] , etc., but all of these mobilizations were sectoral.[100]

As well as the FEJUVE-El Alto, a number of other social organisations played important parts in the protests around gas. The COB played a vital, often forgotten role in the dissemination of arguments around natural gas that would come to unite a diverse coalition of social actors.[101] On 12 September, the COB released their 'programme of struggle', which would come to form the foundation for the October Agenda, the set of social movement demands that emerged from the struggles of the Gas War (Webber 2011b, 220). Jaime Solares, executive secretary of the COB, appeared on national television explicitly connecting the hunger strike of Felipe Quispe and other leaders of the CSUTCB to 'a wider struggle for social justice and a critique of neoliberalism' (Webber 2011b, 206). The COB also called a general indefinite strike on 29 September, and convened a *cabildo* in Plaza San Francisco on 2 October that drew a larger attendance than any other action throughout the preceding month of urban and rural protest (Webber 2011b, 220). The Coordinadora, reformed by Oscar Olivera in Cochabamba, the *cocaleros* and the MAS, led by Evo Morales, also joined the COB, the FEJUVE-El Alto and COR-El Alto in proclaiming the defence of gas (Webber 2011b, 214).

In short, if protests against municipal taxation revealed the relationship between the increasingly acute crisis of neoliberalism and its effects on social reproduction, and

[100] Carlos Barrera, member of the FEJUVE 2003, interview, La Paz, 10/05/2016.
[101] It is unsurprising that FEJUVE leaders stress the importance of the FEJUVE, but there were other important actors in helping further radicalise the Bolivian population.

the Warisata massacre sparked a mass movement comprised of a broad alliance of peasants and the urban working-classes, gas made the movement take flight and challenge the legitimacy of state power itself.

A Break with the Old Order: The Radicalisation of the FEJUVE

Having explored the reasons why the Gas War proved significant, the following section scrutinises the *mechanics* of protest and how activists were able to coordinate and sustain blockades and marches across an entire city for over two weeks. To understand this, we need to explore the relationship between political parties, different social organisations, and the leadership and rank-and-file of these organisations in this moment.

One of the important features of the crisis of the state outlined above, and a central reason why it surpassed the levees of parliamentarianism in this moment, was the deficiency in Bolivian liberal democracy and its incapacity to offer a solution to the unfolding crisis. The pact democracies that characterised neoliberal government had created a representative system where

> the political parties had become predominantly electoral machines and, when successful, administrators of state reforms with an international character. As a result, parties ceased to be a space for the elaboration of the political projects at the heart of civil society (Tapia 2011, 146).[102]

This reduced political action to the ballot box and citizens to voters to be bought in a political marketplace.[103] The relationship between political parties and citizens became one characterised by clientelism—unequal political exchanges between a patron and multiple clients—as political parties offered visible economic resources in exchange for less visible political goods (i.e., votes) (Quisbert 2003, 13). This form of political reciprocity was further embedded in the city of El Alto by the Aymara concepts of *ayni* and *mink'a*. *Ayni* involves the distribution of communal labour through a system of the

[102] See also Tapia (2009, 97–106).

[103] The concept 'political market' was popularised by Italian political philosopher Norberto Bobbio (1987) in his discussion of the compatibility of liberalism and democracy in the conjuncture of the rise of neoliberalism. Bobbio (1987, 130) argues that (liberal) democratic states are always characterised by 'as many bilateral agreements as there are voters'. In El Alto, the interactions occurred through the leaders of social organisation who in turn used their own forms of bilateral agreements with their social base.

direct return of favours (Quispe 1988, cited in Gutiérrez 2008, 103), and *mink'a* is the demonstration of solidarity with the community through collaboration on a communal project. Both *ayni* and *mink'a* have been important in the self-construction of zones [*manzanas*], basic services, streets, health centres and homes, enabling migrants to settle in El Alto in spite of (or because of) the absence of the state (Linsalata 2010, 46). On the one hand, whilst displays of *ayni* were common in El Alto during festivals and in everyday encounters, especially among newer migrants, it was also subsumed into a hierarchical political culture of exclusion and domination whereby citizens, engaging in political reciprocity, were offered economic gains in return for their vote (Quisbert 2003, 31). On the other hand, *mink'a* contributed to leadership positions being seen as an individual's turn to reap the rewards of the community's labour (and wealth).

During neoliberalism the champion of this form of political relationship in El Alto was TV-personality Carlos Palenque and his Conciencia de Patria (Consciousness of the Fatherland, CONDEPA) party.[104] Palenque operated a form of populism in El Alto which explicitly recognised the reciprocity and solidarity of the *ayni* and *mink'a* (although in distorted forms) as parts of Andean culture to be celebrated (Quisbert 2003, 51). Along with the UCS of beer-magnet Max Fernández, CONDEPA acted as a valve to release the discontent building up in El Alto regarding the unrepresentative nature of the neoliberal political parties (MIR, MNR, ADP). Through constructing personal relationships with the leaders of social organisations—including the street vendors, the market vendors, the COR-El Alto and the FEJUVE-El Alto—the CONDEPA was able to dominate politics in El Alto throughout the 1990s until Palenque's death in March 1997 (Quisbert 2003, 51–55). Without his charisma, the CONDEPA was unable to maintain unity and political power, and had lost its hold over social organisations by 1999 (Lazar 2008, 258).

The loss of Palenque left a political vacuum in El Alto, which the traditional political parties proved unable to fill. By the 1997 elections, the three main parties had become ideologically indistinguishable, all wed to the neoliberal reforms set in motion over a decade earlier, and differentiable only by their contrasting pragmatic relations and cultural or symbolic characteristics (Quisbert 2003, 50). Thus, as the economic

[104] This replaced the clientelism of the 'only party' MNR, which predominated in the period after the 1952 revolution (Quisbert 2003, 37–43).

crisis began to intensify in the late-1990s, these parties had no answer to growing discontent except the deepening of neoliberalism itself, which proved unpopular in the context of growing political radicalism in El Alto at the time.

Eliminating Clientelism

At the turn of the century, the bases of the social organisations—the COR-El Alto and, vitally, the FEJUVE-El Alto—turned against leaders who cultivated clientelist relationships with these parties, giving space for a new generation of leaders who emerged from the radicalising rank-and-file *alteños*. The embryonic emergence of this rupture with the old order and their organisations can be seen in the protests to form UPEA from May 2000 onwards, a struggle that would come to play a significant role in breaking with the old generations of leaders.[105] The UPEA students were able to maintain their autonomy from political parties and other social organisations even as the movement fractured. For Sian Lazar (2008, 20), who was teaching at the university at the time, this was a movement (like many others) that was riven with factionalism. However, this was not warring factions of different political parties, but struggles for power between the old leadership attempting to maintain its weakening grip on clientelist networks and a new generation of leaders not yet integrated into such relations. Abraham Mansilla argues that

> there was a new generation that was not political [not linked to political parties]… that took the directive and defeated the old leaders… The first phase of the struggle that conquered the university broke into two factions [*banderas*], an extremely pro-government faction and an anti-systemic faction… and this [anti-systemic] movement of the students defeated the [pro-government] leaders and expelled them for good from UPEA.[106]

Mansilla underscores how in this moment local leaders were divided between those wedded to existing forms of clientism and a more radical current, his comments illustrating the breaks that were happening within struggles during the period after the fall of CONDEPA. The autonomy from political parties—leaders that 'had not yet been

[105] A.D. Mansilla, 25/09/2016.
[106] A.D. Mansilla, 25/09/2016.

politicised' in Mansilla's words—allowed a new generation of radical leaders to take control of the UPEA student movement and push for an anti-systemic agenda.

The rejection of leaders integrated into the old clientelist networks intensified in the period running up to 2003, with part of the disorder and anger displayed towards symbols of neoliberal power during 2003 being a reaction to the stifling effects that clientelism had had on politics within the city. When speaking about the *impuestazo*, FEJUVE-El Alto leader Lucho Zapata stresses the containment of the discontent within El Alto by the old leadership of social organisations in the prior period, and how the people broke out in February 2003:

> The people were furious because of everything that was happening, and that was because there was too much corruption [*prebendalismo*] in certain sectors.[107] In order to be politically dominant, the anger [of the *pueblo alteño*] was contained for a long-time [by the old leadership] and [then] it leapt and we all broke away but we did not know how to control it.[108]

For Zapata, February 2003 was the first moment when the working-classes were freed of the old system of political bribes [*prebendalismo*] that had stymied independent political actions during the previous decade or so, but there was no organisational capacity to direct and sustain mobilisations when they emerged. Luis Flores also argues that the break with clientelism and the old leadership was important in the positioning of the FEJUVE-El Alto as an infrastructure of class struggle during October 2003:

> We had come [to the leadership] to ask for work, not *pegas* [political favours]. This is how we spoke, we did not want [clientelism]… we came to make the FEJUVE… transparent. This time the authorities did not trample upon us, we did not let them… they were not going to offer us anything, not *pegas* nor *prebendas* [political bribes]. This was going to be a healthy FEJUVE, and it was going to be healthy until our last day of office.[109]

In the face of the climate of clientelist relationships between different factions of the FEJUVE-El Alto and the political parties of the MAS and Unidad Nacional (National

[107] Anthropologist Robert Albro (2000, 40) characterises *prebendalismo* as 'practices of electoral gift giving… rooted in much older established cultural expectations… between *patrón* and *peón*'.
[108] Lucho Zapata, 26/04/2016.
[109] Luis Flores Mendoza, member of the FEJUVE-El Alto 2003, interview, El Alto, 26/04/2016.

Unity, UN) during my fieldwork in 2016-2017, the cohort of the FEJUVE-El Alto 2003 are always going to stress their independence from political parties. Indeed, one of the foundational pillars of the neighbourhood councils is their civic rather than political status, and their statute ostensibly prohibits alliances with political parties, although this is rarely the case in practice. However, there is enough evidence—from both firsthand accounts and commentary on the events of the Gas War—that suggests the FEJUVE-El Alto did attain a greater degree of political autonomy during this period, and had largely managed to free itself from poisonous clientelist relationships that had hampered its ability to be a political representative of the *alteño* population.

The FEJUVE-El Alto and Spatial Repertoires of Struggle

The Gas War represented a moment of mass political action where the neighbourhoods across El Alto were shut down by barricades and decisions were made in some 500 communal assemblies across the city (Mamani 2006, 277). These communal assemblies were spaces of democracy outside of the state, which was prevented from entering both physically through roadblocks and symbolically through public discussions and displays of direct democracy that subverted the representative democracy of the state. Pablo Mamani (2005), an *alteño* activist present at the heart of these moments, calls these new political units *microgobiernos barriales* (neighbourhood micro-governments). The rich social fabric of El Alto, forged through migration patterns (mass migration of people from particular regions of Bolivia to the same neighbourhoods of El Alto), family relations, shared work efforts and materials, and the high levels of social need, formed the basis for these *microgobiernos* (Mamani 2005, 10). This dense social fabric was strengthened to differing degrees across the city through daily interpersonal relations that characterise life in El Alto, and the collective struggles for social survival, construction of public works (e.g., schools, plazas, healthcare centres, paving the roads, installing electricity and water), and periodic festivals discussed in the previous chapter.

By October 2003, Mamani (2006, 277) argues, such was the intensification of these social relationships amongst the *alteño* population that not even the FEJUVE-El Alto nor COR-El Alto could exert themselves across the city. Many commentators—including Mamani (2005, 107–109) himself—have stressed the importance of *ayni urbano* in this moment, pointing to symbolic moments where *alteños* emphasised their

Aymara culture through speaking the language, chewing coca, waving the chequered rainbow (the indigenous flag the *wiphala*), communal meals known as *apthapi* and blessings called *ch'allas.*[110] Whilst I do not deny the importance of the indigeneity of the *alteños* in reproducing struggle, I also would like to underscore the material channels through which this *ayni* operated, namely the pre-existing structure (operating with a great degree of autonomy) of the neighbourhood councils within the larger citywide structure of the FEJUVE-El Alto.

Whilst the radicalism of October 2003 originated from the rank-and-file, the organisational structures of the FEJUVE-El Alto were vital to sustaining and amplifying the protests. Neighbours used effective methods of social control, borrowed from the meetings of neighbourhood councils, during this moment, and the attendance lists for each *manzana* were used to ensure solidarity (Mamani 2005, 71).[111] Neighbours would also pass door to door along the street, marking the doors of families who had not sent a representative to participate in local meetings and barricades with white crosses. This was also a moment where the FEJUVE-El Alto was able to respond to the demands of the bases and structure a response, through passing coordinated instructions for actions through youths on bicycles and on foot, the radio and, occasionally, conservations with district leaders on mobile phones (Mamani 2005, 119). Local 2003 youth activist Marco Llanos highlights the transparency of the FEJUVE-El Alto in this moment, where decisions made at the local level of zones were passed up to the FEJUVE leadership via the 9 district directives, with coordinated responses passed down the other way via the same channels.[112] This enabled strategically organised and coordinated struggle to be sustained over the entire city.

The spatial tactics of struggle employed during the Gas War are hardly surprising given the FEJUVE-El Alto's role in constructing the city. The main avenues and streets were dug up, with trenches and ditches making the city impassable. Stones, cans, adobe bricks and bottles were used to build blockades (Mamani, 2005, 89–90, 108). Neighbours set up check-points to exert control over territories and to prevent the military and the police entering neighbourhoods. Footbridges were toppled to block the road, and railway carriages were heaved off the bridge over the La Paz-

[110] See also Linslata 2010, Zibechi 2010a.
[111] Marco Llanos, youth activist during October 2003, interview, La Paz, 12/04/2016.
[112] Marco Llanos, 12/04/2016.

El Alto highway to divide the two cities in dramatic fashion (García Linera et al. 2004, 614).

The flash points during the struggles in El Alto during October 2003 were strategic locations within the space of El Alto: Río Seco, Senkata and La Ceja. Río Seco is the location of the one bridge that crosses the river, over which all vehicles coming along the Copacabana highway (the road to Lake Titicaca and the northern *altiplano*) must pass. Senkata is home to the gas depository and where gas going to La Paz from El Alto starts its journey. Finally, La Ceja is the vibrant commercial and symbolic centre (as oppose to the geographic centre) of El Alto. It is where the leader of the 1781 indigenous insurrection, Túpak Katari, and his followers are supposed to have camped during the siege of La Paz, home to swathes of street vendors, and the end of the main highway to La Paz. These three locations were vital in the battles of the Gas War, the epicentres of state violence perpetrated by the military and the places that witnessed the most deaths.

Unsurprisingly, given the inequality traced into neoliberal space, there were radical areas within the protests and some conservative zones. As well as districts 4 and 5 (near Río Seco) and district 5 (Senkata), the under-serviced outer districts (particularly districts 7 and 8) proved the best organised and the most receptive to radical ideas (García Linera el al. 2004, 615).[113] Interestingly, the radicalism of struggles of 2003 was so uneven across the city that there were also *anti-revolutionary* districts that organised vigilante squad to protest the zone from their 'disorderly' neighbours.[114] The ways in which processes of class formation were traced in space during the 1990s created pockets of the middle-classes in El Alto who disapproved of the disruption of the protests and disorder of their unruly neighbours. They barricaded themselves in their *manzanas* and emerged only once the drama had played out. These zones highlight the importance of the traces of inequality in space during this protest, and the uneven ways that the Gas War protests unfolded, despite an insistence from some *alteños* today that the city rose up as one.[115]

Black October was the culmination of historical dynamics that started decades before. The economic crisis of the late-1990s stripped the neoliberal economic model and the traditional political parties of their legitimacy. Amidst deteriorating living

[113] Marco Llanos, 12/04/2016.
[114] Marco Llanos, 12/04/2016; Jorge Villca, 21/04/2016.
[115] Hermógenes Chambi, FEJUVE-El Alto leader, interview, El Alto, 18/04/2016.

conditions the experience of class led to the accumulation of a critical class consciousness, which began to become visible during the protests against tax hikes. The old clientelist networks disintegrated in the face of a political crisis, allowing the FEJUVE-El Alto to become an infrastructure of class struggle. Residents coordinated through neighbourhood councils used spatial repertoires of struggle accumulated through the self-construction of the city to lay the city of La Paz to siege, galvanising a political crisis that abated only once the president Sánchez de Lozada had left the country.

Negotiating a Way Out: Carlos Mesa, the MAS and the Second Gas War

Despite the severity of this crisis and the radicalism of the struggles of 2003, the protests of October 2003 had a parliamentary exit as the vice-president Carlos Mesa, supported by the Movimiento al Socialismo (Movement Towards Socialism, MAS), assumed power. The political party MAS emerged out of the CSUTCB during the 1990s. State repression towards coca growers of the Chapare in the department of Cochabamba—many of whom were Trotskyist ex-miners from the miners' union—galvanised strong, organised resistance and positioned the *cocaleros* as the radical force at the heart of the peasant confederation (Albro 2005, 438, Sanabria 1999, 551, Stefanoni 2002, 17–21).[116] The *cocaleros* strength resided in their willingness to pursue multiple strategies simultaneously, and during this period they also began an electoral strategy to challenge the dominant neoliberal paradigm. Initially their political instrument assumed the form of the Asamblea por la Soberenía de los Pueblos (Assembly for the Sovereignty of the Peoples, ASP) led by Alejo Véliz, running on a joint ticket with Izquierda Unida (Left Unity, IU) (García et al. 2014, 129). However, disputes between the three leadership contenders—Evo Morales, Felipe Quispe and Alejo Véliz—saw the party split into the Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti (Indigenous Pachakuti Movement, MIP) led by Quispe and the Instrumento Político por la Soberenía de los Pueblos (Political Instrument for the Sovereignty of the Peoples, ISPS) led by Morales (García et al. 2014, 101–106). The ISPS had trouble registering as an official party and so borrowed the name of the then-defunct falangist political

[116] García *et al.* (2014, 204) argue in their account of the formation of the MAS that the INRA law was key to understanding the radicalisation of the CSUTCB, which was formed to fight for 'the land and territories of the indigenous-originary peoples'.

party Movimiento al Socialismo Unzaguista (Unzaguista Movement Towards Socialism, MAS-U) in order to get on the electoral register (García et al. 2014, 107–108). Thus the MAS was born, garnering 3.27 percent of the national vote on its first outing in the 1997 elections.

In November 2001 the *cocalero's* struggle intensified when President Jorge 'Tuto' Quiroga promulgated a supreme decree 'prohibiting the drying, transport and sale of coca planted in illicit zones in the principal market' (Salazar 2013, 66). The resultant clashes in the central coca market in Sacaba, which left scores dead, came to be known as the Coca War (Ledebur 2002, 9–10). These struggles contributed to the rise of the MAS as an electoral force. In the 2002 elections the MAS announced itself on the national political scene, garnering 20.9 percent of the vote, less than 2 percent less than the eventual victors, the MNR led by Sánchez de Lozada (Van Cott 2005, 89). There were two notable moments that have been attributed with helping this meteoric rise: Morales' expulsion from congress in 2002 and the ill judged comments of US ambassador to Bolivia, Manuel Rocha (Van Cott 2005, 90). The expulsion of Morales from congress for his role in the 2002 Coca War aligned the interests of social movements and the MAS political party, as Morales became a metonym for the poor, oppressed *Bolivia Rebelde* (Rebel Bolivia). The *cocaleros* used numerous different political tactics and repertoires—including 'agreements with the government, mobilisations, struggles, and even localised clashes with public forces, along with negotiations at various levels for small and large demands' (Gutiérrez 2014, 82)—to achieve their political goals. This flexibility positioned them well and they were able to navigate the complex political terrain at the time through social movement activism and parliamentary politics. Morales was considered the voice of marginalised Bolivians in the face of US-led programs, and led Félix Patzi (2003, 223) to go as far as to claim this moment 'was stamped as a new way of doing politics'. This image was further re-enforced by Rocha's comments a matter of days before the elections: 'I want to remind the Bolivian electorate that if they vote for those who want Bolivia to return to exporting cocaine, that will seriously jeopardise any future aid to Bolivia from the United States' (cited in Campbell 2002). Following these comments Morales' running-mate Filemón Escobar promised that 'each vote that you give to the MAS is a kick in the behind of the Ambassador' (cited in Van Cott 2005, 90). Morales and the MAS were thus transformed into an anti-imperial vote and representatives of the social movements of the insurrectionary cycle 2000–2005. This image of the MAS has since

been perpetuated by the main ideologue of the MAS, vice-president Álvaro García Linera, and Morales became *the* victory of the social movements and the pinnacle of the social struggles of the period (Salazar 2015, 128).

The Government of Carlos Mesa and the Second Gas War

The Mesa government was a tempestuous affair, with the country increasingly becoming divided along ethnic and geographical cleavages. Whilst the autonomist movement ramped up in Santa Cruz, Mesa tried to tackle the thorny issue of hydrocarbons through a referendum. The hydrocarbon referendum questions, drafted by the Mesa government and the MAS, strategically avoided nationalisation and instead suggested an increase in hydrocarbon's taxes and royalties to 50 percent of profits (Gutiérrez 2014, 136–37, Webber 2010, 55). This allowed the government to receive its desired response, enabling Mesa to delicately balance the demands that emerged from the Gas War with the profit rates and property rights of transnational capital (Hylton and Thomson 2005, 58). However, many of the social organisations central to October's struggles boycotted the vote, demonstrating that the referendum did not resolve the issue of natural gas.[117]

The Mesa government, supported by the MAS, was able to maintain this balance of forces until the end of 2004-beginning of 2005, when the social forces at the heart of the Gas War once again exploded over the private provision of water by Aguas del Illimani, a subsidiary of the French multinational Suéz. The US$445 connection fee—around nine month's salary for the average *alteño*—left over 200,000 people in El Alto outside the service area of Aguas del Illimani (Spronk 2007, 20). After six months of minimal progress in negotiations with the government, the FEJUVE-El Alto called a general strike (Spronk 2007, 20), supported by the COB, the CSUTCB and transport unions, who were also mobilised by the proposed price hike of gas (Contartese and Deledicque 2013, 57). Simultaneously, under the pretext of protesting the rise in government-subsidised diesel prices (a key input in agroindustrial production), the CPSC organised a series of actions—'hunger strikes, work stoppages, the naming of a "pre-autonomous" council, and the physical occupation of state institutions'—designed to demonstrate the regional strength of the media-luna

[117] These included the COB, the CSUTCB, the COR-El Alto, the FEJUVE and the Coordinadora for the Defence and Recuperation of Gas (Hylton and Thomson 2005, 58).

departments (Gustafson 2006, 354). Huge open-air *cabildos* were called to discuss and promote regional autonomy, producing the Agenda de Junio (June Agenda) in June 2004 and the Agenda de Enero (January Agenda) in 2005, when a reported half-a-million *cruceños* participated in a pro-autonomy meeting (Argirakis 2016, 63). Underlying these actions was a racist politics that divided the country between *kollas* (a racially charged name for highlanders) and *cambas*, with *cruceños* stressing the purity of their lineage as Spanish descendants and their implicit 'whiteness' in the face of the indigenous movements of the *altiplano* (Gustafson 2006, 356).[118]

In this moment the delicate balance was broken as the division between left-indigenous forces and the eastern bourgeoisie became clear to see (Hylton and Thomson 2005, 59). Mesa's progressive veneer disappeared and although he did not follow his predecessor and send in the tanks, Mesa took a clear neoliberal stance, proclaiming the importance of hydrocarbon and water multinationals whilst simultaneously denouncing social movement leaders (Hylton and Thomson 2005, 59).[119] The alliance between the MAS and Mesa ruptured as the MAS led extra-parliamentary actions demanding the promised 50 percent tax rate on hydrocarbon extraction be guaranteed (Webber 2010, 60). Hopes within the MAS of working with Mesa evaporated as Mesa's shift rightwards became clear, and the left-indigenous forces of October 2003 were again united under the umbrella of the nationalisation of gas (Webber 2010, 66). The FEJUVE-El Alto and the COR-El Alto announced a general strike in mid-May, and within two weeks the protests had spread to Sucre, Potosí and Cochabamba. On June 6 2005 between 400,000 and 500,000 *alteño* protestors marched to La Paz from El Alto, forcing Mesa's resignation. These protests were larger even than those of October 2003 and were a reminder that despite Mesa's apparent willingness to compromise with social movements, the underlying contradictions and radicalism outlined for the 2003 period were still present in the second Gas War of May-June 2005. Protests continued for the following days to stave

[118] One of the central contradictions of Nación Camba is contained in their stressing a *mestizo* heritage with Guaraní influence and yet maintaining racial politics juxtaposing European decent against indigeneity (Gustafson 2006, 354). Moreover, Wilfredo Plata Quispe (2008), in his study of the myths driving the autonomy movement, highlights how the massacre of indigenous people (particularly the Guaraní) during the foundation of Santa Cruz and its formative years is erased from *cruceño* versions of history.

[119] This is not surprising. Mesa never represented much of a break from Sánchez de Lozada, for whom, remember, he acted as Vice President until very nearly the bitter end. Once Mesa assumed office he filled his cabinet with neoliberal ministers from the start (Webber 2010, 54).

off right-wing attempts by first Hormando Vaca Díez (MIR) from Santa Cruz then Mario Cossío (MNR) from Tarija to seize power (Webber 2011b, 258). Rodríguez Veltze, the president of the Supreme Court, offered an exit and assumed the presidency until the elections of December 2005, when MAS and Evo Morales won 52 percent of the vote.

Creating a Government of Social Movements: Three Dimensions of Co-optation

Evo Morales and the MAS assumed office in early 2006 having won the first majority in national elections since Bolivia's return to democracy in 1982. The social movements—both rural and urban—that had been radicalised and accumulated political consciousness during the previous period turned out in massive numbers to vote for the MAS, as did middle-class allies won over by Morales' careful and 'sensible' position under much of the Mesa presidency. As such, the MAS presented itself as the representative and mediator of popular, indigenous and working-class movements (Tapia 2011, 111), and ideologue and vice-president Álvaro García Linera (2011) pronounced the MAS 'the government of social movements'.[120]

In order to understand the dynamics of the MAS governments it is necessary to unpack processes of transformism at play in this moment and the relationship between the MAS political party and social movements. There were, I argue, three central dynamics to transformism: (1) from the perspective of the state, there was the molecular integration of social organisation leaders into the state, either explicitly through official posts or implicitly via the installation of new networks of clientelism; (2) complementing co-optation, the creation of parallel umbrella organisations by the state claiming to represent the same constituency, further undermining the opportunity for independent, transformative political action by social organisations; and (3) from the vantage of social organisations, the susceptibility of their leaders, causes and tactics *to be* co-opted into the state.

Firstly, co-optation of individual social movement leaders was (and still is) an important governing strategy of the MAS government. The MAS offered high-ranking positions within the government and state administration to government supporters

[120] Tapia (2009, 137–48) argues that everyday relationships and meetings with social organisations—something that has disappeared in recent years—was not enough to call the government a 'government of social movements' given the electoral strategy of the MAS and the liberal nature of the state

from within movements (see table 4.4). In fact, 69 percent of Morales' first ministerial cabinet (10 out of 16 ministers) was drawn from social organisations, including the COB, the FEJUVE-El Alto, the Federación Nacional de Cooperativas Mineras (National Federation of Cooperative Miners, FENCOMIN), the domestic workers' union and indigenous sectors (Oikonomakis and Espinoza 2014, 295).

Table 4.4: Social Organisations in 2006 Ministerial Cabinet

Name	Government Post	Social Organisation
David Choquehuanca Céspede	Minister of External Relations	Indigenista Aymara Activist linked with the CSUTCB
Alicia Muñoz	Minister of Government	Anthropologist
Celinda Sosa Lunda	Minister of Economic Development and Micro-firms	Federation of Peasant Women "Bartolina Sisa"
Wálter Villaroel/Guillermo Dalence	Minister of Mining and Metallurgy	FENCOMIN/COB
Félix Patzi Paco	Minister of Education	Aymara Activist
Nila Heredia Miranda	Minister of Health and Sports	COB
Santiago Alex Gálvez Mamani	Minister of Work	Federation of Factory Workers
Hugo Salvatierra	Minister of Productive Development and Plural Economy	COB
Casimira Rodríguez	Minister of Justice	Domestic Workers' Federation
Abel Mamani Marca	Minister of Water	FEJUVE-El Alto

Source: Espinoza 2015, 136

A good example of the impact of this strategy on social organisations is that of the FEJUVE-El Alto. The pragmatic position of the MAS under the Mesa government meant that the FEJUVE-El Alto fought much of the Water War in El Alto (December 2004–March 2005) without the support of the MAS, who only re-allied with the FEJUVE-El Alto in March during the run up to the May-June 2005 Gas War (Gutiérrez 2014, 220). However, in the following period the MAS government worked hard to keep the FEJUVE-El Alto on side, acknowledging the political power of the organisation in the city of El Alto. The most evident outward sign of the co-optation of the FEJUVE-El Alto by the MAS was the appointment of ex-leader Abel Mamani, a key figure in the 2004 water struggles, as Minister of Public Works (Farthing and Kohl

2014, 36). The perspectives of a leader of the FEJUVE-El Alto in 2003, Carlos Barrera, captures how the FEJUVE-El Alto has been co-opted by the MAS:

> [The MAS] prefer to capture the leadership, … to bribe leaders… The leaders take money from all sides, responding to the political interests of the MAS, who are no longer just politicians but *politiqueros* [career politicians].[121]

Barrera highlights how bringing social movements into the state has opened up new relations of political clientelism [*prebendalismo*] as political support once again has become an exchangeable good. Indeed, local MAS activists are quite open about the political strategy of the MAS at the local level. The MAS has sought to gain control of local social organisations through tying leaders to their political project through a variety of means, as the comments of *alteño* MAS activist Christian Estebes reveal:

> We have managed to position *our people* inside the FEJUVE and onto the new leadership. The same has happened in the *juntas escolars* [parents' councils] and the market guilds. The fruits of what we are sowing now we will reap in 2 or 3 years, maybe more, but these good origins, these good relations already exist. This is how we are organising in El Alto.[122]

Local activists have activity tried either to win leaders over to the MAS or win the leadership positions directly in order to further the political influence of the MAS in civil society.

Co-optation of social organisation was accompanied by the second dimension of state-society relations under the MAS: the creation of government-sponsored parallel organisations. The reduction of the horizons of social movements to the state was complemented by the creation of a new Viceministry of the Presidency, the Viceministerio de Coordinación con Movimientos Sociales y la Sociedad Civil (Viceministry for the Coordination with Social Movements and Civil Society, VMCMSSC), in February 2006 and the Coordinadora Nacional pro el Cambio (National Coordinator pro Change, CONALCAM) in January 2007. These two new entities effectively formalised links between the MAS government and social movements, institutionalising the strategies of co-optation used by the MAS government to garner popular support and the informal contestatory element of its

[121] Carlos Barrera, 10/05/2016. It is important to stress *politiquero* is a pejorative term.
[122] Christian Estebes, MAS School of Political Formation, interview, El Alto, 15/07/2016.

segmented popular interest intermediation regime. Displacing organic alliances (described in more detail below) as the recognised voice of indigenous social movements (Salazar 2015, 202), they became mechanisms to control and resolve social conflict quickly and efficiently, rather than means to foster the transformative potential of social struggle (Mokrani 2009, 207). CONALCAM was designated the mechanism through which social movements would participate in Bolivian politics:

> CONALCAM will come to be not only a space of social control, but also a space where social demands are presented, laws are agreed, measures against militants or leaders who generate conflict or division are decided, new leaders are formed and actions to defend Evo Morales are coordinated (cited in Mayorga and Zuazo 2012, 350).

CONALCAM extended the ability of the MAS to influence and control social movements, creating formal channels, assisted by the VMCMSSC, between the state and the social organisations themselves.

Once entangled in corporate relations with the MAS, these leaders, argues Tapia (2011), cannot complete their function as civil society leaders and make demands for their social bases. On the contrary, these leaders disseminate the position of the MAS, pacifying the rank-and-file of movements. Other old FEJUVE-El Alto leaders have a similar outlook on these dynamics, as the words of Carlos Rojas illustrate:

> After we finished our administration [in 2005] the government of Evo Morales submitted the new leadership to its will. There is no longer the independence that [the FEJUVE-El Alto] once had. First, they submitted to granting quotas of power, giving some leaders bribes. In some cases they silenced dissident voices because they had started to exercise absolute control over not just the FEJUVE but the neighbourhood councils too.[123]

For Rojas, the MAS slowly started to exert control over the FEJUVE-El Alto, using the distribution of resources and employment as public officials as means to manage local leaders. Rojas stresses that the MAS penetrated not just the citywide coordinating body but the local organisations, neighbourhood councils, at the level of the *manzana*. It went further than simply integrating the upper echelons of leadership into their

[123] Carlos Roja, 11/05/2016.

government. It extended throughout Bolivian civil society through channels opened up by social organisations. The MAS has

> created a network of political inclusion through the selection of some leaders that have had different trajectories within other sectors and incorporated them into the legislature and executive, complemented by a chain of bribes incorporating leaders from civil society (Tapia 2011, 116).

The external pressure exerted on the FEJUVE-El Alto by the MAS eventually split the FEJUVE-El Alto into pro-government and radical factions,[124] demonstrating the intertwined nature of the first two dynamics of state-society relations under the MAS.

The third dimension to state-society relations under the MAS government is the experiences *from below* of the social organisations themselves. Political theorist and ex-director of the Centro de Investigación Social (Central of Social Investigation, CIS), Jorge Viaña, adds another layer of complexity to his analysis of social movement co-optation by the MAS:

> There are people that only see co-optation, the tutelage, the subordination and after the clientelism, political bribes [*prebendalismo*] and this is a Manichean view of history, that is to say there are not only absolute executioners and absolute victims… if we are talking about power and decision-making, the powerful movements of 2000 to 2005, they also have a history and a tendency *to be co-opted*.[125]

Viaña's perspective captures the multiple dynamics of co-optation and slow reduction of radical possibilities of challenges to capitalist modes of accumulation and the capitalist state over time. 'Conservative processes that weaken progressive advancements', Viaña (2012, 389, my emphasis) argues, 'are strengthened through processes of alienation *both in society and the state*'. Focusing only on the state or society separately—to analyse the co-optation of social movements simply from the side of the actions of the MAS—leads to incomplete or misleading analysis.

Political bribes and co-optation of local leaders alone, as Tapia (2011, 116) acknowledges, are insufficient to explain widespread support for the MAS. Other factors, including the presentation of the government as indigenous and popular, are

[124] This division is explored in more detail in chapter 6.
[125] Jorge Viaña, political philosopher, interview, La Paz, 31/10/2016.

also vital to the government's support.[126] Sociologist Fabiola Escárzaga (2012, 151) argues that there was an expectation that Morales and the MAS, as an *indigenous* government, would represent and fulfil the demands of social movements and so there was a consensus among social movements that there was no need to continue to be mobilised. In my opinion, in light of the enormous political consciousness across different sectors of society, this is an insufficient explanation of social movement pacification. Instead of equating electoral support for Morales with the end goals of the radical social movements, political scientist Huáscar Salazar (2016, 635) argues 'the popular sectors in struggle conceived Morales's government as a necessary but disposable means to achieve their own horizons'. The ascent to presidency by Evo Morales was seen as *a victory* not *the victory* of social movement struggles, and the organic support of social movements for Morales was a concrete political strategy used to pursue larger goals (Salazar 2015, 128–35). These goals were polyphonic and quite at odds with the political landscape dominated by a single political force that emerged during the first term of the MAS government (Mokrani and Uriona Crespo 2011, 114). However, in the course of the first five years of MAS governments strategies of co-optation, themselves part of broader processes of transformism, demobilised social movements and orientated them towards making demands through the pre-existing channels of the state.

Conclusion

This chapter addresses the social movements of the revolutionary cycle (2000–2005). The focus of the chapter was the October 2003 Gas War, the apogee of struggles. I began by tracing the formation of cross class alliances that started in the Water War of 2000 in Cochabamba, through the rural struggles of the CSUTCB in the department of La Paz up to October 2003. I outlined the conjuncture of this moment, including the growing division of the country into 'two Bolivias' by first the Aymara nationalism of Felipe Quispe and later by the autonomist movement of the media luna, expressions of the economic crisis of neoliberalism and its social discontents visible in the localised struggles against tax hikes in February 2003 and later in El Alto in September 2003. I explained how the nationalisation of gas became *the* frame of social movements able

[126] See the secotion in chapter 5 on the sublime-profane nature of Evo Morales

to unite a disparate alliance of social actors that eventually toppled the government of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada.

The second part of the chapter sought to answer the question of why the FEJUVE-El Alto became the infrastructure of class struggle at the heart of the actions in October 2003. I traced the growing radicalism of *alteños* through the creation of the public university, UPEA, the *impuestazo* of February 2003 and the fights against the implementation of the municipal taxes *maya* and *paya*, arguing that in these moments,*alteños* connected the deterioration of the quality of their everyday lives to the broader deleterious nature of neoliberalism. However, these struggles were still unorganised and needed a social organisation to coordinate them. The FEJUVE-El Alto provided this infrastructure, having been freed of clientelist relations with the death of Carlos Palenque in 1997 and the crisis of political parties in the city, assisted by a new generation of leaders formed through struggles. The result of these interconnected processes, I argue, was an organisation that could sustain city-wide protests for over two weeks and topple a government using spatial repertoires of struggle drawn from its role as a territorial organisation involved in the (self-)organisation and construction of the city.

Lastly, I explored why the moment of catharsis closed and the ways in which social movements were aligned with the MAS government to become Morales' social base. There were, I contend, three overlapping dynamics to co-option. Firstly, the MAS government explicitly assimilated social organisation leaders into the state by offering them official posts, as well as implicitly integrating leaders through new networks of clientelism. Secondly, the MAS created parallel 'official' umbrella organisations, undermining independent, transformative political action by social organisations. Thirdly, looking at these processes from below the susceptibility of their leaders, causes and tactics *to be* co-opted into the state are clear. Combined, these three dimensions of co-option of social movements by the MAS curtailed the radicalism traced through the first two parts of the chapter which accumulated during the revolutionary cycle (2000–2005).

Chapter 5
The Political Economy of State Formation under Evo Morales

This chapter examines the different facets of the political economy of state formation that have occurred since Evo Morales assumed office in January 2006, shedding light on the multi-layered processes of transformism in Morales' Bolivia. It sketches out the dynamics of passive revolution from above through a state-centric perspective, focusing on government policies and the political economy of the state. There are, I argue, a number of different dimensions to passive revolution in the Bolivian case, all of which overlap, sometimes complementing each other, at other times contradicting one another. Here I will examine: (1) the integration of social movements into the state from the perspective of state formation (complementing the discussion in the last chapter from the perspective of social movements); (2) the sacrifice of Bolivia's profane natural body for the benefit of the sublime nation, articulated through the government's development plan and leading to the country's deepening insertion into the world market as a primary commodity producer; and (3) the profanity and sublimity of the president, Evo Morales, himself.

Before the analysis is presented here, it is necessary to return to the state theory laid out in the first chapter. Firstly, the co-optation of social movements through assuming ministerial roles within the MAS government does more than simply demobilise movements (as argued in the previous chapter). The transformation of offensive social movements with radical transformative horizons beyond the state to movements defending the government reconfigures state-society relations. It represents the expression of civil society in political society and their dialectical unity, creating an integral state. In this context, consent garnered by social organisations in civil society act as 'trenches' in Gramscian terms, as political struggle across society is now managed not only by state actors, but also by civil society organisations and actors who are incorporated through co-optation and forms of state managerialism. This reconfiguration of state-society relations extends the scope of the state and embeds the state edifice within broader society.

Secondly, the expansion of extractivism and its infrastructure not only affects modes of accumulation and exploitation within the country, but also the form of the state itself. It weds the 'progress' of the Bolivian nation to the continued sacrifice of its

natural resources through the extraction of hydrocarbons and mineral resources. This, argues Fernando Coronil (1997, 113), is a feature of modernising states with natural resource wealth, such as Bolivia, where the divinity of God is replaced by the sublimity of the nation and the mortal body of the King by the profanity of Mother Earth. Such an approach links the dynamics of political economy in Bolivia—the growing importance of natural gas exports for state revenues and the opening up of virgin parts of the country to the wants of transnational capital—to processes of state formation.

Thirdly, and following from the second dimension of progress through extractivism, is the profanity and sublimity of the figure of Evo Morales himself. Part of the political strategy of the MAS has been to concentrate the gains of this period in the persona of Evo. The MAS present him as all that is good in Bolivia, whilst his 'invited' ministers—more or less highly educated technocrats drawn from outside the ranks of party activists—are blamed for any problems the government might encounter. It is Evo's image that adorns infrastructure projects and that is *the* new indigenous subject of MAS' Bolivia. Evo was a peasant from Oruro, an alpaca farmer who was drawn to the Chapare through harsh neoliberal reforms. His public persona is still that of Brother Evo [*hermano Evo*], one of the people, still capable of erring like everyone else. Until recently, this dialectic made Morales impervious to criticism, and enabled the second stage of transformism, spreading support for the government's ideas amongst the rank-and-file party supporters and social movement activists. It also has created myopia and impasse in Bolivian politics, with the MAS unable to produce Morales' successor and, oddly enough, the opposition parties also incapable of moving past their presidential candidates from the neoliberal period.

This chapter thus seeks to trace these broader processes from the inauguration of Evo Morales in January 2006 to the fallout from the re-election referendum in January 2016 whilst I was in Bolivia undertaking my fieldwork research. Firstly, I sketch how the social movement radicalism was gradually transformed into the social base of the government. Specifically, I examine the Constituent Assembly (2006-2008) and the autonomy battles between the government, social organisations and the lowland elites to explore how social movements were aligned with the government and the impacts of transformism on processes of statecraft. Secondly, I outline the broad political economy of this period and the macroeconomic strategy of the MAS, including nationalisations, industrialisation attempts and infrastructure projects. Finally, I examine the profane and sublime nature of Evo Morales and its lasting effects on state

formation. I argue that the Bolivian state has been greatly extended and strengthened over the period of Morales' rule. However, the contradictions contained within extractivism and in the political strategies of reducing politics to the public persona of Morales himself make these advancements unstable, with little prospect of the MAS continuing their political project without Morales, as the re-election referendum of 2016 demonstrates.

Consolidating the State: The Constituent Assembly and Autonomy Claims

There are two important moments in the first term of the MAS which help further explain how the MAS contained the horizons of social movements in the state, since the dynamics within social movements alone do not have the power to explain the alignment of social movements and the MAS (Mokrani and Chávez 2012, 381). The first moment is the ostensible completion of the most radical demands of the social movements, the nationalisation of gas (discussed in a later section) and the re-writing of the constitution through a popular Asamblea Constituyente (Constituent Assembly, AC), through state managerialism. The second moment is the attempt to destabilise the MAS government and split the country into two by right-wing forces from the media luna. This not only curtailed the absorption of more radical ideas by the MAS, but also helped to align social movements behind the government as defensive forces protecting Morales.

Institutionalising Social Organisations and the Constituent Assembly

The demand for a Constituent Assembly which emerged out of indigenous movements during the 1990s (Schavelzon 2012, 4), was taken up by the social movements of the period 2000-2005. The AC was conceived as a popular mechanism for indigenous groups to recoup self-determination from the state, rather than as a mechanism enabling integration into the existing liberal state. Between 2004 and the AC process (2006-2007), the Pacto de Unidad (Unity Pact, PU)—a coalition of numerous lowland and highland groups[127]—was the main proponent of the demands for a new

[127] The Unity Pact was comprised of Confederación Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu (National Confederation of *Ayllus* and *Markas* of Qullasuyu, CONAMAQ), CIDOB, the CSUTSB, Las Bartolinas, the women's wing of the CSUTCB, the colonist settlers' union, the landless peasants movement, the Assembly of the Guaraní People, the Block of Indigenous

constitution centred on a plurinational reconfiguration of the Bolivian state. The PU developed a nuanced and complex position on a number of different areas, and was ever-present in debates around 'the model of the state, ordering of territory and autonomy, natural resources, land and territory, political representation and collective indigenous rights' (Garcés 2013, 32). Based on the multiple groups and identities that comprised this coalition, the PU developed a document that would be the 'vertebral column' of the AC (Vega 2012, 40). For the PU, plurinationalism meant that the *naciones y pueblos indígenas, originarios y campesinos* (indigenous, originary and peasant nations and peoples) of Bolivia would have direct representation in all government levels and powers as collective subjects, in accordance with their customary practices (Pacto de Unidad 2006, 5).[128] Direct and participatory democracy—through mechanisms including communal assemblies, a social organisation veto on unpopular policies and referendums—was positioned alongside the representative democracy of the liberal state, and the three powers of the liberal state (executive, legislative and juridical) were extended to include 'plurinational social power' (Pacto de Unidad 2006, 6).

Responding to this demand of social movements, the MAS passed the Law of Convocation of the Constituent Assembly in March 2006, scheduling elections of delegates for the AC for July 2006. Given its popular genesis and its centrality to the radical struggles of the previous period, social movements concentrated their energy almost exclusively on the AC during the first term of the MAS (Salazar 2015, 150). However, from the outset the AC assumed a different form to the suggestions of social movements. Firstly, the election of assembly delegates acquired a partisan nature and blocked the participation of social movements (including the PU) in the AC as separate collective subjects. This cemented the centrality of the state (through the MAS) in the constitutional process and forced indigenous groups into alliance with the MAS political party (Regalsky 2010, 46), assigning it a larger role of intermediation (Iamamoto 2013, 170–71). This was vital as the MAS did not have proposals of its own, and used the process to generate stability around the nucleus of state power (Salazar 2015, 199).

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and Peasant Organizations of the Northern Amazon and the Salaried Workers' Union of Santa Cruz (Garcés 2011, 49).

[128] For further reading, see also Garcés (2013).

Secondly, as the MAS did not control the Senate they were forced to enter into political negotiations with the opposition, limiting the possibility of direct indigenous representation (Schavelzon 2012, 143–44). Following these compromises it was agreed that there would be 255 assembly deputies: 210 deputies directly elected through a list system where the top three candidates from the seventy electoral districts are elected; and 45 proportionally elected deputies through relative majority (Mokrani and Gutiérrez 2006). However, the law contained a 'minority protection rule' whereby a party could only win a maximum of two (out of three) deputies in each constituency even if they received over 75 percent of the vote. The final delegate would be from a minority party that won over 5 percent of the vote, According to Dunia Mokrani and Raquel Gutiérrez (2006), this acted as

> a means to assure representation for a small minority of *ad hoc* right-wing organizations with some local clout. Without this clause, these groups would not attain representation in the Assembly.

This clause gave representation to far-right groups within the process and denied the MAS the two-thirds majority needed to approve a prospective constitutional text, as the Law of Convocation of the Constituent Assembly stipulated (Schavelzon 2012, 146).[129] The MAS won 137 of the 255 delegates, but importantly PODEMOS run by ex-president Tuto Quiroga won 60 delegates and the MNR 18 delegates, giving the political right a total of 99 seats or 39 percent of the AC seats, more than the 33 percent they needed to block any proposed text (Mokrani and Gutiérrez 2006).

The final feature of the AC which shaped it into a legitimising process of the liberal state form was the role of the Representación Presidencial para la Asamblea Constituyente (Presidential Representation for the Constituent Assembly, REPAC), which was created in March 2006. The REPAC was a space dominated by vice-president García Linera and heavily influenced by the liberal international organisations Fundación CEPS and the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). REPAC positioned itself as the 'articulator nucleus' of the PU, transforming the form and content of the PU's proposals to fit into liberal models of 'new Latin American constitutionalism' (Salazar 2015, 200). This effectively denied the PU an independent voice in the AC process. Moreover, from January 2007 REPAC created a small group of technocrats from different organisations, the 'grupo de 12'

[129] This became a major point of conflict, as discussed below.

(group of 12), in a move ostensibly designed to speed up the negotiating process. This small group was only half drawn from the PU, with the other members coming from different MAS delegations (Salazar 2015, 201). In this way, the MAS was able to place themselves as the power within the assembly and sideline social movement forces, as the words CSUTCB leader Isaac Ávalos reveal:

> We have almost done no work with the group of 12 because that group is on a different path; they wanted to impose something that we do not agree with… we decided not to work with them and instead to work directly with the commissions of the assembly, the CSUTCB and the Unity Pact (cited in Garcés 2011, 61).

The MAS used the AC to reinforce the processes of social control that had already begun outside the AC, reducing the ability of leaders and social movements in general to be a genuinely creative force and aligning them in a defensive position behind Morales.

Autonomy Battles and the Media Luna

The other important development needed to understand the realignment of social movements as the social base of the MAS, as well as the nature of the resultant text of the AC, is the increasing spatial divide between the eastern lowlands and western highlands exacerbated by right-wing forces based in the media luna. The election of Morales realised the worst fears of the *cruceño* elite, who amplified their opposition to Morales' government and indigenous and working-class social movements through the notion of autonomy.

Building on the June Agenda of 2004 and the January Agenda of 2005, the autonomy movement of the media luna continued the struggle to form 'two Bolivias' that they had started as a response to Felipe Quispe's Aymara nationalism (Dunkerley 2007, 16). The spearhead of Right-wing *cruceño* demands for autonomy, the Nación Camba movement, used a racist lens (disseminated through local TV channels and the Santa Cruz newspaper *El Deber*, as well as their website www.nacioncamba.net) to portray the country as divided into two opposing poles. Nación Camba counterposed the western highlands region, defined as an Andean-*kollo* colonial state, to the 'modern', *mestizo* eastern lowlands (Schavelzon 2012, 190–91).

Although the 'No' vote in the autonomy referendum of June 2006 won on the national level with 57.6 percent of the vote, 'Yes' won in the four media luna departments of Beni, Pando, Santa Cruz and Tarija (Agrirakis 2016, 77). The autonomy movement built on this popular support and convoked the Cabildo de Millión, where a reported 350,000–400,000 took to the streets of Santa Cruz on 2 July 2006 to voice their support for regional autonomy (Miranda 2010, Plata 2008, 154, Schavelzon 2012, 150, 189). Whilst these figures are most probably inflated, they do demonstrate the effectiveness of the agenda at aligning popular support behind the elite's agenda (Webber 2011a, 95). Nicole Fabricant (2009, 770) argues that public spectacles like that of the Cabildo del Millón were essential in winning popular support for the autonomy movement:

> elite-backed public spectacle is an attempt to make certain things dramatically visible, it is also, by extension, an attempt to render things invisible… Identity-based performances, the public celebration of the region's most beautiful women, and the ritualized burning of effigies of the president hide or mask the true intentions of destructive economic and social policies of accumulation by dispossession or the commoditization and privatization of land and the forceful expulsion of peasant populations by militant youth groups.[130]

Through these spectacles the *camba* elites managed to successfully obscure their underlying class interests and frame autonomy as in the interests of all *cruceños* regardless of class or race. They sought to garner popular support by stressing the bureaucratic nature of the central state (at the time official bureaucratic procedures [*trámites*] could only be done in La Paz) and arguing that control of the department's resources would bring increased investment in the city of Santa Cruz (Kirchner 2010a).

As anthropologist Nancy Postero (2017, 48–51) notes, the discourse of autonomy was also a strategy to disrupt the AC, and ensuring that all articles of the new constitution had to be passed by a two-thirds majority, meant that the Bolivian

[130] The autonomy movement was part of the opposition to the proposed agrarian reform, passed in the end of November 2006, which might have broken up the large landholdings of the lowland elites (see Fabricant 2009, 2010, 2011, Fontana 2014, Gustafson 2010). Several authors (e.g., Salazar 2015, Webber 2011a) note that this land reform has left large landholding vitally intact. Monocrop production by large-scale agroindustry controlled by transnational capital, especially along the agricultural frontier in the department of Santa Cruz, has increased under Morales (Castañón 2017).

Right could influence (if not control) the dynamics of the AC. The connection between autonomy and the AC was easy to make given the decision of the MAS to announce a referendum on departmental autonomy—a concession to their political opponents—on the same day (4 March 2006) as the decree proclaiming the AC was passed (Webber 2011a, 85). In his work on the autonomy discourse of *cruceño* elites, Wilfredo Plata (2008, 155) argues that the lowland bourgeoisie used the threat of splitting the country to try and manipulate the dynamics of the AC to produce a constitution which 'entrusted the executive and legislative competencies to [the media luna departments]'. Postero and Fabricant (2013, 204) also contend 'the force of the autonomy movement pressured the Morales government to negotiate with lowland elites, and ultimately to include many of their demands for regional autonomy in the final constitution'.

This political jockeying around autonomy would prove to be an important part of the AC. In September 2006, MAS delegates attempted to change the rules of debate, arguing that the AC was original, rather than derived from the previous constitution, and thus not constrained by its legal framework and the Convocation Law (Postero 2017, 49). In response, the opposition paralysed the AC for months through a variety of marches, assemblies and hunger strikes, whilst opposition delegates boycotted the assembly. One of the most visible protests was the autonomy *cabildo* in Santa Cruz in December 2006, which enacted departmental autonomy through a popular vote that was later ruled illegal by the Supreme Court (Fabricant 2009, 203). The governor of Cochabamba Manfred Reyes attempted to follow suit, proposing a new referendum on departmental autonomy in December 2006. Violent clashes followed between right-wing supporters of Reyes and popular forces—both rural and urban organisations including the COD-Cochabamba, university students, the transport unions and rank-and-file *cocaleros*—who were mobilised by the MAS government (Webber 2011a, 111–14).

Although negotiations between the opposition and the MAS started the procedures again in February 2007, protests and violence punctuated the assembly (Postero 2017, 50). Refusal to meet demands to make Sucre the national capital again led to violence in the city of Sucre, protests which unsurprisingly, given the tactics used of the autonomy movement dividing the country along ethnic lines, contained a racist streak (Schavelzon 2012). By the end of November 2007 the violence orchestrated by the opposition and their supporters made continuing negotiations

difficult, with three people dying in street violence directed at indigenous groups (Salazar 2015, 204). Worried about the AC running aground again, Morales bused MAS-delegates to Oruro to convene a controversial 16-hour second session without the opposition that produced a preliminary constitution text (Postero 2017, 50).

The autonomy movement ramped up following this controversial second session of the AC. Whilst the new Constitución Política del Estado de Bolivia (Political Constitution of the State of Bolivia, CPE) was being celebrated in La Paz, Santa Cruz announced the promulgation of the Autonomous Statute of the Department of Santa Cruz as a response to the approval of a new constitution with 'ethnic features' that was the result of the closed negotiations (Plata 2008, 156–57). The autonomy law established Santa Cruz as a fully fledged federal state with control over its natural resources, including land, hydrocarbons and forestries (Plata 2008, 159–61). Although this was declared illegal by the government, Beni, Pando, and Tarija each followed suit and attempted to unilaterally implement their own autonomy laws (Kohl 2010, 110). Then in May 2008, the Department of Santa Cruz held an autonomy referendum where 82 percent of voters opted for autonomy. However, the referendum was once again declared illegal and unconstitutional by a number of organisations, including the Electoral Court (Dangl 2008). Tensions were high and violent skirmishes between pro-government and pro-autonomy factions broke out in various sites cross the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, including in Plan 3000 (Chávez 2009, van Schaick and Bluestone 2008).[131]

The political force of the media luna reached its apogee in August-September 2008. On 17 August 2008 civic prefects in Beni, Pando, Santa Cruz and Tarija announced a civic strike for the 19 August. In the following days, head of the Civic Committee of Santa Cruz Branko Marinkovic called for federalism and civic prefects from across the media luna met to coordinate actions (Argirakis 2016, 91). This was accompanied by a wave of violence from the proto-fascist wing of the Civic Committee of Santa Cruz, the Unión Juvenil Cruceñista (Cruceño Youth Union, UJC), whose belligerence grew following the attack on the police chief of Santa Cruz in mid-August (Chávez 2009, 6). These racist youths—flanked in this moment by thousands of paid youths (Miranda 2012, 140)—were at the forefront of the actions reclaiming autonomy, beating unarmed trade unionists and peasants with sticks, whips and two-by-fours

[131] The importance of Plan 3000 in these struggles is explored in more detailed in chapter 7.

(Webber 2011a, 135–36). By the 10 September, the UJC had spearheaded the violent occupation of 45 institutions across the media luna departments, whilst simultaneously autonomy protesters blockaded hydrocarbons installations and shut off the gas pipelines to Argentina and Brazil (Argirakis 2016, 92). On 11 September, the anniversary of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet's 1973 coup, violence reached fever-pitch, with clashes between government supporters and the UJC in Plan 3000 throughout the day (Chávez 2009, Zibechi 2010). On the same day, in a distant part of the country, tens of peasant activists were slaughtered with machine gun fire in an attack orchestrated by the prefect of Pando Leopoldo Fernández (Soruro 2011). In what came to be know as the 'Porvenir Massacre', the autonomist movement's violent and racist nature was laid bare and its pretence of being a pro-democracy movement fighting against an oppressive dictatorship evaporated. International condemnation was swift as leaders from across the region voiced their solidarity with the MAS government (Webber 2011a, 141). This marked the end of the so-called civic governors' coup attempt, and Morales' government expelled US ambassador Phillip Goldberg for the role of the US in supporting the coup, proof of which arrived with the release of official documents by Wikileaks (2015, 503–10).

The Porvenir Massacre, argues Salazar (2015, 156), was a point of inflection for the MAS government, a position that I agree with. It represented the complete alignment of social movement forces with the MAS and the limitations of their horizons to the state.[132] Throughout the AC the MAS called on social movements to defend the government (Webber 2011a, 95), a call which was answered with vigour in Cochabamba in early 2007 and in Sucre later that year. In the wake of the Cabildo del Millión in Santa Cruz, MAS-supporters organised the biggest open air cabildo in the history of the country, defending the government in the face of protests in Sucre and arguing '*La sede no se mueve*' (the seat of government will not move) (Schavelzon 2012, 244). However, as Webber (2011a, 111) notes, the MAS were careful to withdraw their most radical forces from the fray in order to ensure that growing political radicalism did not surpass the limitations imposed on the MAS by their political trajectory within the liberal state.

[132] New oppositional forces would emerge in the next phase of Morales' presidency in the wake of the conflict over the construction of a highway through a natural park (see below).

This scenario began to change as the opposition became increasingly belligerent throughout the AC, and by the recall referendum of August 2008 social movements had already largely become positioned as defenders of Morales and his government (Kohl 2010, 111). After demonstrating reluctance to confront the right-wing elites of the media luna during its first two years of government, the Porvenir Massacre pushed the government into action, militarising Cobija and arresting Fernández for his part in the violence (Salazar 2015, 211). The government then mobilised social movements through CONALCAM to pressure congress and the Bolivian bourgeoisie, divided and defeated, allied (temporarily) with the MAS (Salazar 2015, 212). Through CONALCAM, the MAS government directed social movements away from further pressuring the elites based in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra (a struggle that might have completely defeated the old *cruceño* landowners) and instead directed them at congress to ensure it accepted the CPE text García Linera had negotiated with representatives of the opposition behind closed doors during September-October 2008 (Salazar 2015, 213–14).

Thus closed the radical opening created by the social movements of the previous period as one of the central demands to emerge from these struggles—the re-foundation of the country through a popular AC—was completed. Moreover, through this process, social movements were re-directed towards the state as a pressure point for change by the MAS via CONALCAM. This, I argue, marked the transformation of offensive social movements with radical transformative horizons beyond the state to defensive movements protecting the gains won through the AC and the first years of the MAS government. In doing so, this reconfigured state-society relations and strengthened the legitimacy of the state in civil society.

The Political Economy of the New Development Plan: GDP Growth, Macroeconomic Stability and Nationalisation

The MAS laid out their economic proposal through the 2006 National Development Plan (NDP), which on the surface was a radical attempt to transform the structure of the economic base and move away from ‘western’ conceptions of development to a harmonious model of social development grounded in solidarity, diversity and plurinationality: *vivir bien* (living well) (Bolivia 2006, 10–12). I argue, however, that the NDP consolidated existing forms of capital accumulation, even as the progressive

outcomes of absolute and relative poverty reduction were secured for the Bolivian working-classes and peasantry—results which reflect the possible progressive outcomes of the restoration-revolution dialectic of passive revolution underscored by Massimo Modonesi (2012).

The development strategy of the MAS governments has been to divide the Bolivian economy along a main axis, differentiating strategic sectors producing surplus from employment and tax producing sectors (Bolivia 2006, 91).[133] Surplus producing sectors—including hydrocarbons, mining, and energy production—provide the state resources that are then redistributed and redirected into employment intensive areas, such as industry, manufacturing and artisan production, tourism, agricultural development, housing, commerce, transport and other services. Three conditional cash transfers,[134] the improvement of infrastructure (especially roads), and support for agricultural sectors provide the policy mechanisms for this redistribution.[135] This main axis is crossed by a transversal axis, the government dividing state infrastructure between production infrastructure (transport, telecommunications and electricity) and productive services, including the Bolivian System of Innovations and the Productive Development Bank (Cunha Filho and Santaella Gonçalves 2010, 183). These two axes lie at the heart of the government's plan to construct a 'plural economy' (García Linera 2008).

The old neoliberal power bloc—comprised of capital operating in agribusiness, hydrocarbon and mining extraction and private banks (García Linera 2008, 7)—was to be replaced by a new national economic power bloc; this positioned the state as the principal protagonist in economic activity, working with small and large rural and urban producers and subordinating large capital of the neoliberal bloc, forming a new plural economy (García Linera 2008, 14). However, as I will show, the effect was to deepen Bolivia's insertion into the global market as a primary commodity producer, whilst leaving intact the country's underlying class structure. It also repositioned the profane natural body of Bolivia as dispensable, extractable and, in some cases, combustable for the good of the sublime body of the Bolivian nation.

[133] 'Surplus' here is understood from an accounting perspective rather than as the more theoretical Marxian concept.
[134] Renta Dignidad, Bono Juancito Pinto, and Bono Juana Azurduy target pensioners, children, and young mothers respectively.
[135] Ana Verónica Ramos Morales, speaking at the MAS school of political formation in El Alto, 06/10/2016.

Nationalisation

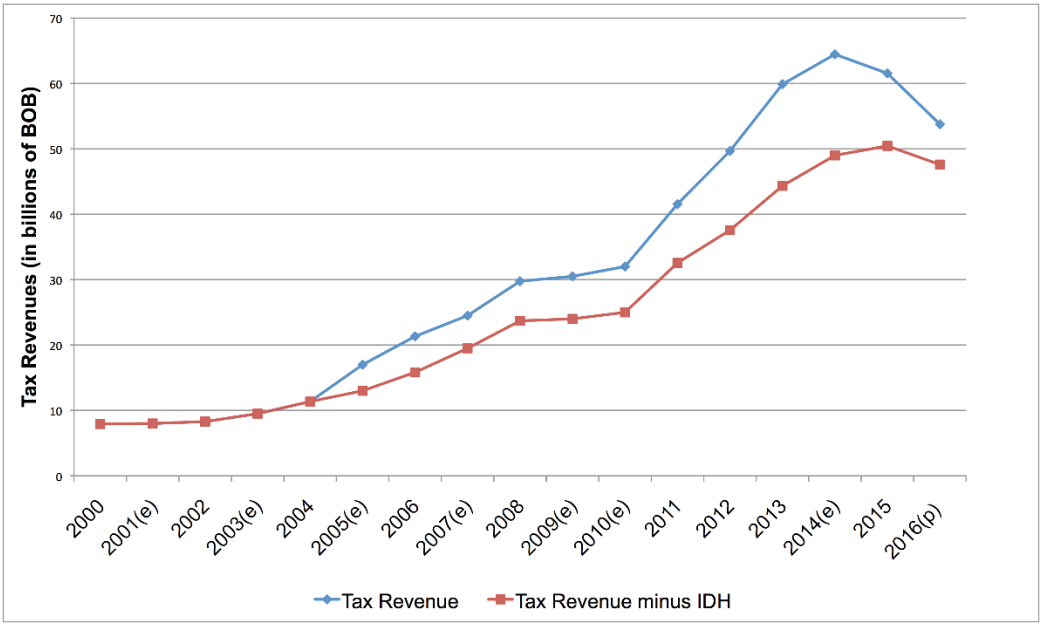
The initial steps taken by the first MAS government towards a plural economy encompassed a series of nationalisations to increase the state's participation in multiple different sectors within the economy, including telecommunications, energy and transport (an airline). The most significant nationalisation was that of gas, which was announced through a theatrical military occupation of the Margarita gas fields in the Chaco region of southern Bolivia on 1 May (Labour day) 2006 (Kohl and Farthing 2014, 38). The Supreme Decree giving producers the rights to commercialisation at the point of extraction was declared unconstitutional by the Morales regime, allowing the government to renegotiate exportation contracts (and a higher export price of gas) with Argentina and Brazil (Kaup 2010, 129). The government then announced DS28701, setting a new royalties and taxation regime. This allowed the government to capture 82 percent of hydrocarbon profits and left private companies with only 18 percent. However, this was only a temporary measure lasting 180 days whilst the government negotiated 44 new contracts with twelve petroleum companies, including the two biggest players, Repsol and Petrobras (Webber 2011a, 81).

The nationalisation of hydrocarbons did not change the ownership of Bolivia's natural resources as the state did not appropriate any property of transnational companies (Gray Molina 2007, 119), and it made sure that it gave adequate compensation for the companies the state acquired under the watchful eyes of international observers (Arze and Gómez 2013, 77). The new contracts signed in October 2006 contained shared production elements of the 2005 Hydrocarbons Law 3058 signed by the Carlos Mesa government. This positioned the state as an overseer of production whilst private capital 'executes the entirety of its operations at its own expense and receives direct payment defined in relation to recuperation of costs, prices, volumes and investments' (Webber 2011a, 82). The upshot of this contractual arrangement was that the control of production stayed in the hands of multinational companies, with Petrobras and Repsol actually increasing their share of production (Arze and Gómez 2013, 80).

Notwithstanding the concessions made by the MAS government in the so-called nationalisation of gas, the government was able to capture a larger portion of hydrocarbons rent through the new contracts and the Impuesto Directo de

Hidrocarburos (Direct Hydrocarbons Tax, IDH), another lasting legacy of Mesa's 2005 hydrocarbon law that increased the state's share of natural gas rents.

Graph 5.1: Nominal Bolivian Tax Revenues 2000–2016



(p) = preliminary

(e) = estimate

Source: MEFP 2017, 24

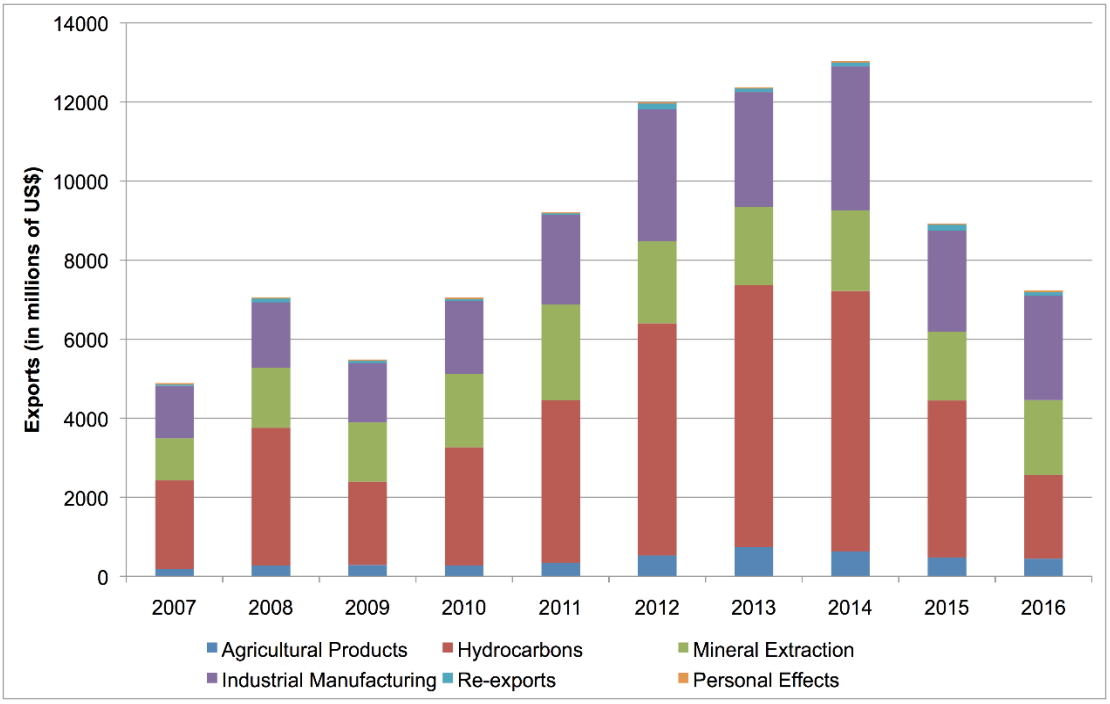
This was part of the reason the government's nominal annual tax revenue increased from 7.9 billion BOB in 2000 to 53.8 billion BOB in 2016, an almost seven-fold increase in the state's nominal tax revenues (see Graph 5.1).[136]

Macroeconomic Stability and the Commodities Boom

This increase in the capture of hydrocarbons rent is only half of the story, as the other main driver of this large increase in rent was the commodities boom between 2002 and 2011. This was the underlying global dynamic behind the shift from the Washington consensus to the commodity consensus (Svampa 2013). In Bolivia, the nominal value of exports increased enormously under the governments of Evo Morales, from just under US$5 billion annually in 2007 to a peak of just below US$13 billion dollars in 2014.

[136] US$1 has been equivalent to approximately 7BOB over the past decade.

Graph 5.2: Exports by principal products of economic activity 2007–2016 (in current millions of US$)



Source: Adapted from INE 2018

As graph 5.2 demonstrates, hydrocarbons represented the bulk of these exports (along with mineral extracts) and increased their share of exports between 2007 and 2014 (a trend that has reversed slightly with the massive fall in global oil prices).

This commodities bonanza coincided with high GDP-growth rates across Latin America (Webber 2015, 577). Bolivia averaged a GDP growth rate over the 2006–2016 period of 5.49 percent, compared to 3.64 percent in the previous period 1989–2005 (INE 2018). GDP-growth has been cemented through the country's macroeconomic stability, which has been one of the principle features of the Morales governments. As with other left-wing Latin American governments, the MAS was initially framed as a threat to economic stability in the region (Webber 2014a, 46). However, macroeconomic stability was treated as a necessary pre-condition for economic success, as the former executive of the committee that runs the Ministry of Economics and Public Finances, Marianela Prada Tejada states:

> we don't see macroeconomic stability as an end in itself. We don't believe in the maintenance of stability at any cost. Rather, we think

> of it as a medium through which we can achieve all the rest of the policies of the government (cited in Webber 2014a, 47).

The macroeconomic stability achieved by the MAS governments since 2006 has allowed the government to take advantage of the commodities boom. As well as impressive GDP-growth, the government has increased international reserves six-fold from US$1.7 billion in 2005 (approximately 20 percent of GDP) to US$10.4 billion (28 percent of GDP), the second highest reserve rate in the region after Peru (MEPF 2017, 6). The modest transfer of the massive rents generated by the hydrocarbons sector has also significantly reduced poverty rates as measured through poverty lines and income inequality measured by the Gini coefficient. Since Morales assumed power in January 2006 the instance of poverty has been reduced from 59.6 percent to 39.5 percent in 2016, whilst simultaneously extreme poverty has fallen from 36.7 percent to 18.3 percent over the same period.[137] This poverty reduction has been accompanied by a reduction in income inequality, with the Gini coefficient falling from 55 in 2004 to 45.8 according to World Bank estimates (INE 2018). This has led to widespread praise for the sound macroeconomic management of the MAS from amongst representatives of global capital, including 'the World Bank, IMF, the Economic Intelligence Unit, the *Financial Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*' (Webber 2015, 7).

The Structure of the Bolivian Economy 2005–2016

The positive glean given to the government by macroeconomic indicators, however, is not the whole story. As CEDLA economist Carlos Arze (2016, 6) stresses, these indicators in no way suggest a structural transformation of the economy much less the move towards a non-capitalist system, as vice-president Álvaro García Linera (2011) has previously proclaimed. Apart from a few exceptions, the growth patterns across sectors continued in a similar manner during the neoliberal period (see table 5.1).

[137] Poverty is defined using monthly salaries differentiating rural from urban. In 2012, the poverty line was 524BOB for rural inhabitants and 693BOB for urban residents, whilst the extreme poverty lines were 299BOB and 365BOB respectively (Arze 2016,12).

Table 5.1: Annual Growth in GDP by Economic Activity 2006–2012 (%).

Economic Activity	2006-2012	2013-2016	2006-2016
GDP (at market price)	**4.76**	**4.87**	**5.49**
GDP (at basic price)	**4.51**	**4.58**	**5.17**
1. Mining and Hydrocarbons	6.79	2.7	6.05
2. Manufacturing Industries	4.82	4.91	5.47
3. Electricity, Gas and Water	5.51	5.88	6.15
4. Construction	9.45	7.61	9.78
5. Commerce	4.36	4.27	4.72
6. Transport and Communications	4.84	5.21	5.65
7. Financial Services and Business	5.89	6.45	6.63
8. Services	3.49	5.41	6.3
9. Agriculture	2.31	4.18	3.29
Extractive/Primary Sector (1)	6.79	2.7	6.05
Secondary Sector (2+3+4)	6.59	6.3	7.13
Services/Tertiary Sector (5+6+7+8)	5.07	5.69	5.83

Source: Adapted from INE 2018

Although the extractive industry has continued to be important, growing at just over 6 percent annually between 2006 and 2016, low global oil prices in recent years have had a knock on effect on both natural gas and mineral prices in the global market, meaning that the extractive sector registered a negative growth rate over the 2015–2016 period (INE, 2018). Despite the nationalisation of hydrocarbons and the state's augmented share of hydrocarbon rents—from 29 percent of total revenue in 2004 to 73 percent in 2010—profit recouped by private petroleum companies has also increased from US$879 million to US$1.1 billion over the same period thanks to the

commodities boom (Arze and Gómez 2013, 78–79). Moreover, private capital still controls approximately 80 percent of hydrocarbon production, meaning there has been little transfer in wealth away from the dominant players of the hydrocarbons sector.

In mining, nationalisation has been almost absent, the one exception being the nationalisation of Huanuni and the Vinto sink-and-float plant in 2007 following violent confrontations between formally employed miners and cooperative miners (Díaz-Cuellar 2012, 22, Webber 2011a, 109). However, given Huanuni's inefficiency both in terms of technology and the number of miners employed, it is not a source of state revenue.[138] Conversely, it continues to be dependent on state subsidies for its continued existence, the latest of which was a US$36 million grant by the MAS government in 2016 (Página Siete 2017).[139]

Private capital dominates the Bolivian mining sector, and between 2006 and 2009 medium and large mining companies were responsible for 60 percent of production, whilst state mining company COMIBOL only contributed 5.8 percent of total production (Arze and Gómez 2013, 85). Private capital remained responsible for around 70 percent of total mining production as of 2014, with the state-run COMIBOL only contributing just under 5 percent (Arze 2016, 16). This further underscores the dominance of large-scale private capital in the extractive industries, which has consolidated its advantageous position assumed during the previous neoliberal period (Arze and Gómez 2013, Díaz-Cuellar, 2012, 2017, Salazar 2015). Moreover, the state's ability to capture rent from the mining sector remains limited, climbing from a paltry 3 percent of total produced value between 2002–2005 to 7 percent between 2006–2009 (Arze and Gomez 2013, 87, see also Tassi et al. 2013, 71). The state's inability to collect tax and royalties from mining has been compounded by the growth in a sub-sector of private mining. Mining cooperatives have grown in importance, from 'an estimated 1500 cooperatives with 66,000 members in 2010' to '1642 cooperatives in 2014, with a total of 114,920 members nation-wide' (Marston and Perreault 2016, 3). The cooperative mining sector produces 30 percent of Bolivia's mineral export

[138] Andrea Marsten and Tom Perreault (2016, 12) argue that the environmentally and economically disastrous outcomes of Huanuni have halted other nationalisations in the mining sector. See Perreault (2013) for the ecological and environmental destruction caused by the Huanuni mine.

[139] Boris Villa Valdez, head of the workers of the National Health Fund, interview, La Paz, 26/07/2016.

value, exports that exceeded the magnitude of US$1 billion in 2011 (Francescone and Díaz-Cuellar 2013, 35).

The secondary sector (manufacturing, utilities and construction) has grown the quickest over the last decade, at 7.13 percent (see table 5.1). There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, the manufacturing sector with direct linkages to the extractive industries has grown impressively, with industry linked to the processing of hydrocarbons and non-metallic minerals growing at over six and nine percent respectively (INE, 2018). However, the overall growth figure of 5.47 percent in the manufacturing industry obscures the poor growth rate in the textiles industry (below 2 percent annually), which employs more people than the extractive industries. Moreover, the secondary sector growth rate is further inflated by the high growth rate in the construction sector (9.78 percent), driven by state expenditure on large-scale infrastructure projects, as well as the construction boom in the cities of La Paz/El Alto, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. The tertiary sector (commerce, financial services and services) has also grown at almost 6 percent and all of the urban sectors have outperformed the sectoral growth in agriculture, which languishes behind at 3.29 percent annually over the ten-year period.

The Rise of the Popular Economy

Despite the importance of hydrocarbons exports (especially for state revenue) because of the commodities boom, the extractive sector's contribution to the overall GDP has remained relatively constant (around 11–12 percent) under Morales. This relative stasis is despite sustained GDP growth and a 60 percent increase in real GDP (as measured at 1990 prices) in the space of just over a decade. As the sectoral growth rates demonstrate, the secondary and tertiary sectors have also grown impressively. The Confederación de Gremailes de Bolivia (Confederation of Guilds of Bolivia) claim commercial activity has grown at between 15 and 20 percent annually in the last decade or so (Tassi et al. 2013, 65–65).[140] According to the Ministry of Economics and Public Finance, 220,000 new companies were created between 2005 and 2017 (MEPF 2017, 20). Most of these companies are small-scale operation of between 1

[140] Measuring the actual figures in commerce in Bolivia is difficult because of the lack of state infrastructure to collect data and the high levels of informality within the tertiary sector.

and 4 people operating under informal conditions in the popular economy, reproducing the structure of the Bolivian economy that emerged during neoliberalism.

The redistribution of rent from the productive sectors towards employment sectors by the government has had a significant effect on the popular economy. On the one hand, a higher minimum wage and conditional cash transfers—coupled with the *bolivianización* of the economy due to improved access to credit, loans and bank accounts[141]—have increased the consumption capacity of the Bolivian working-classes (Tassi et al. 2013, 72). For example, the value of sales in restaurants and supermarkets increased ten-fold between 2005 and 2017, highlighting increased personal consumption across the Bolivian economy (MEFP 2017, 18). On the other hand, processes of proletarianisation and commodification have continued and extended as the state has exerted itself more effectively over its territory. Not only can peasants and the working-classes purchase more with their wages, more of them have been orientated towards the market as the source of self-fulfilment and social reproduction. The upshot of the dovetailing of these two dynamics is an increase in aggregate demand and the profitability of commercial activities, catalysing an expansion of the popular economy and the creation of new supply networks linking the major commercial hubs of El Alto, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz to surrounding regional markets and supply nodes, border towns such as Cobija, Desaguadero, Puerto Suárez and Tambo Quemado and the Chilean ports of Arica and Iquique.[142]

Despite claims to the contrary (see Tassi et al. 2015, chapter 2), the popular economy remains focused on commerce—profit-seeking activities based on price differentials across space—and has increasingly cultivated relations with small Chinese films who produce specialised goods that are then brought to Bolivian market places through a type of 'ant trade' [*comercio hormiga*]. Most of the productive activities that occur in the popular economy are small-scale, such as the production of textiles and clothes in workshops hidden away in the city of El Alto, the south of the city of Cochabamba and in the *cuidadela* Plan 3000, or involve the modification of

[141] If in 2005 7 percent of credit was issued in BOB (the majority was in US$), by 2017 97 percent of credit was issued in BOB, highlighting the confidence in the local currency and the participation of locally based customers (i.e. the increasing number of working-class people that have been granted credit) (MEPF 2017, 34).

[142] One of the most important aspects of the intervention of anthropologists Juan Arbona, María Elena Canedo, Nico Tassi, Carmen Medeiros, Antonio Rodríguez-Carmona and Giovana Ferrufino has been to trace the new supply networks of the popular economy. See in particular chapter 3 of Tassi et al. (2013) and chapter 1 of Tassi et al. (2015).

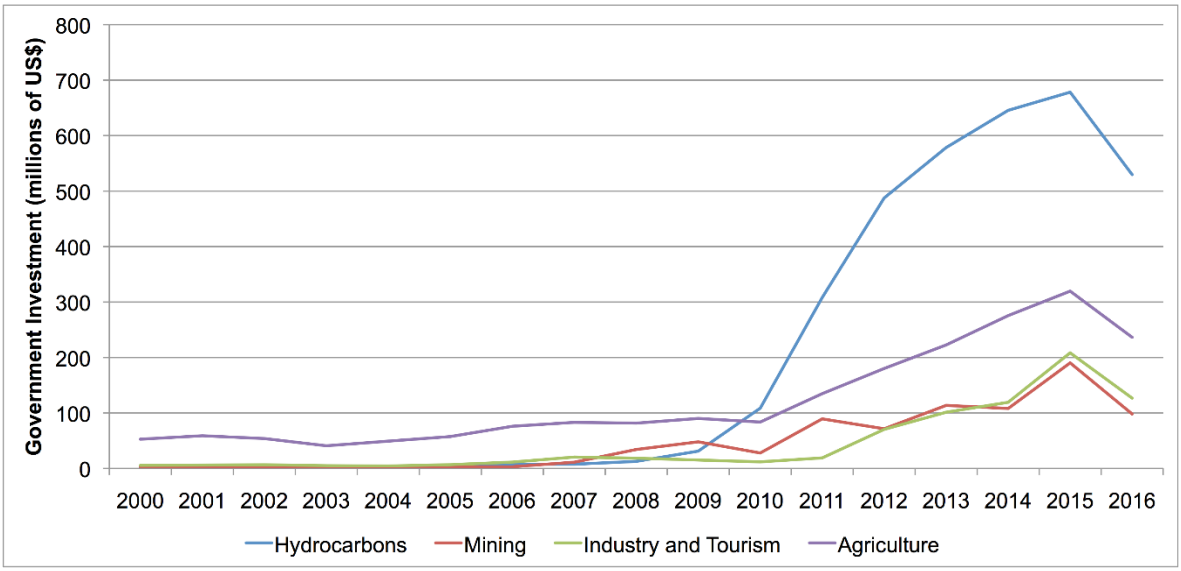
second-hand goods for the local market.[143] In other words, productive activities in the popular economy are small-scale operations that are labour-intensive rather than capital-intensive. They are not the type of activities that have great forward or backward linkages with the rest of the economy and as such they are unlikely to precipitate any transformation of the structure of the Bolivian economy. Rather, they are activities that are a response to the constraints of the structure of the economy that was consolidated during the 1990s.[144]

Industrialisation: Developing the Interests of Capital above Labour

As well as nationalising utilities, reactivating COMIBOL and renegotiating hydrocarbons contracts with transnational petroleum companies, the MAS has also attempted to diversify the economy through a series of industrialisation projects. Industrialisation attempts have also followed the logic of the NDP and concentrated on redistributing income generated from the surplus producing (high productivity) sectors to the employment-intensive sectors. To this end, industrialisation efforts have focused upon the capital-intensive hydrocarbons and mineral extraction sectors in an attempt to add value onto primary exports before they leave the country (Wanderley 2013, 137). Whereas on the one hand agribusiness accounted for 86 percent of the government's productive investments in 2000, it only represented 24 percent in 2016. On the other hand, hydrocarbons investment grew from 5.6 percent of the government's productive outlay in 2006 to 53.5 percent in 2016 (see graph 5.3).

[143] Authors field notes. These adjustments include the transformation of old Japanese delivery vans into minibuses in *alteño* workshops or the alteration of secondhand clothes from the US to better fit the average Bolivian customer.
[144] Antonia Rodríguez, former Minister of Productive Activities, interview, El Alto, 20/07/2016.

Graph 5.3 Government Productive Investment by Economic Activity (millions of US$)



Source: Adapted from INE 2018

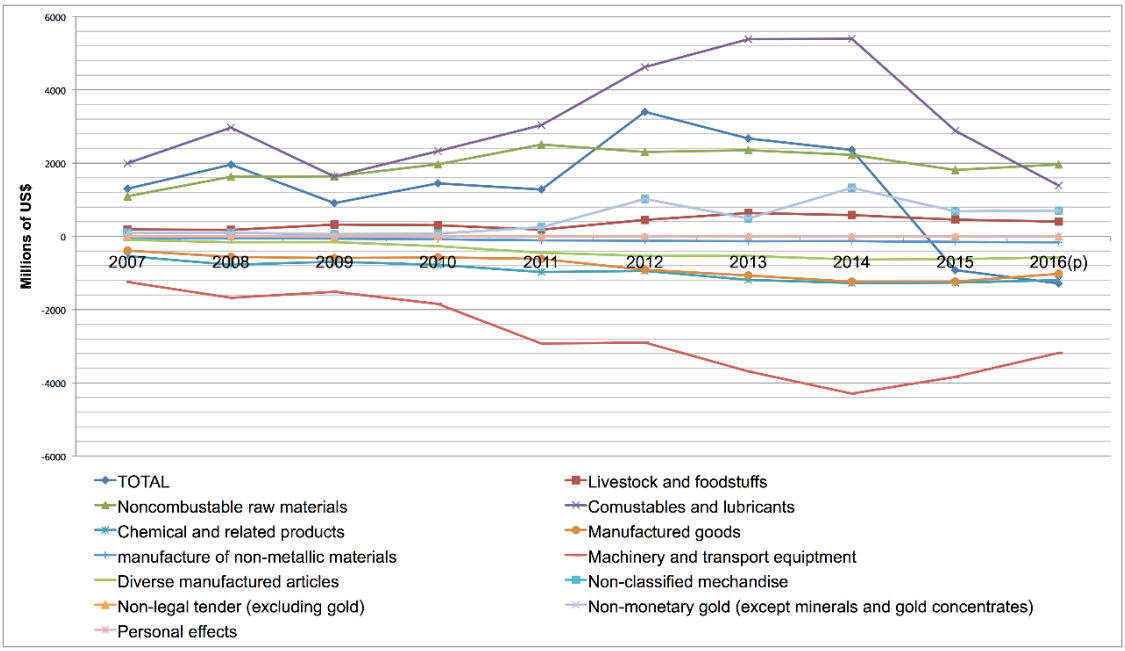
These investments are largely concentrated in and around the gas fields of Tarija, and include the two liquid separation plants at Rio Grande and Gran Chaco, the proposed polyethylene and polypropine plastic plants in Tarija, the ammonia and urea plant at Bulo Bulo and the pipefittings plant in El Alto (Arze 2014, 25). This investment has driven growth in the manufacturing sector with direct linkages to the extractive industries mentioned above (INE, 2018). The government has also tried to encourage industrialisation in the mining sectors through the Plan Sectoral de Minería (Mining Sectoral Plan, PSM). Industrialisation projects under Morales have been blighted by a lack of technical capacity and poor planning, perpetuating the common conception in Bolivia that there has been no industrialisation under Morales whatsoever.[145] The majority of the industrialisation projects of the MAS have been in capital-intensive sectors located in distant corners of the country away from metropolitan centres. The focus on capital intensive sectors linked to mining and hydrocarbons above the urban manufacturing sector which employs more people has generated discontent amongst urban working classes, who cite the lack of industrialisation as one of the main factors behind the continuing informality, precarity

[145] See Arze (2014, 2016) and Farthing and Kohl (2014) for detailed accounts of some of the shortcomings of MAS industrialisation projects.

and lack of quality employment in the axes cities of La Paz/El Alto, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz discussed in the section on employment above.[146]

The government's development plan of redistributing profits from productive sectors into employment sectors has orientated the state towards the protection of the interests of capital above those of the working-classes. It has also amplified the importance of hydrocarbons and mining exports and further exposed the Bolivian economy to the vicissitudes of global commodity prices. The macroeconomic effects of this strategy are visible in the trends in Bolivia's balance of payments (see graph 5.4).

Graph 5.4: Balance of payments 2007–2016 (millions of US$)



Source: Adapted from INE 2018

Bolivia was able to run a balance of payments surplus (see the navy blue line with dots) during the commodity bonanza thanks to hydrocarbons exports (purple line with dots). However, the fall in hydrocarbons export revenue quickly pushed the economy into a balance of payments deficit. Simultaneously, reliance on imports of manufactured goods and machinery and transport equipment—sectors that the MAS governments have not attempted to develop—has amplified (see the red line),

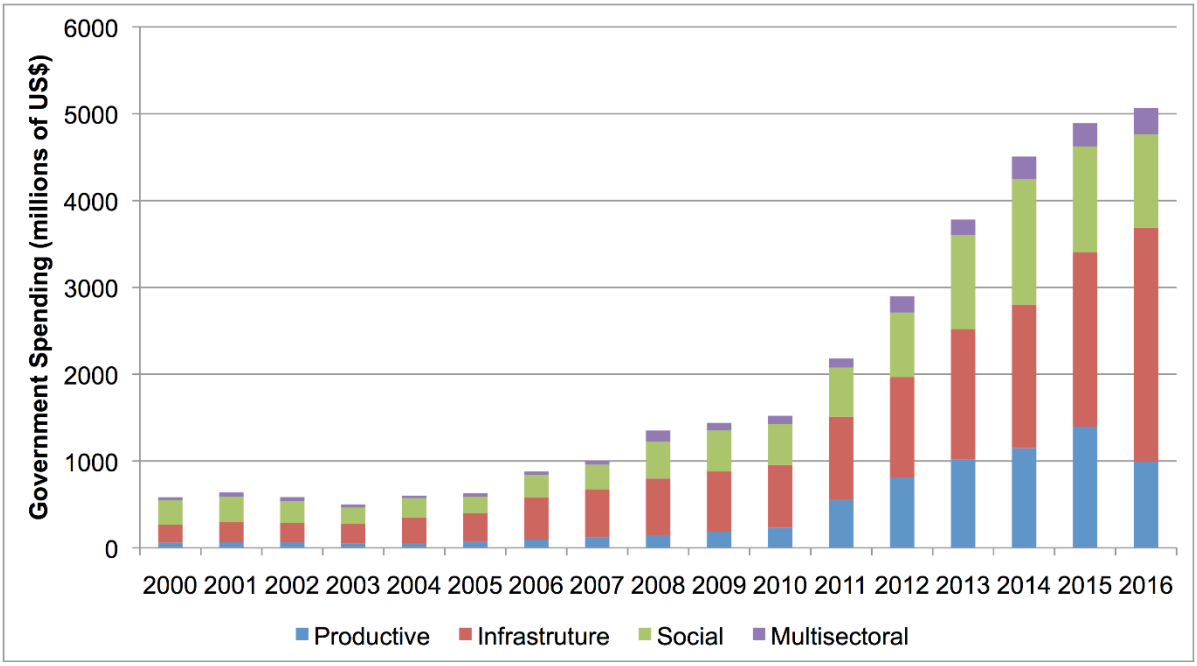
[146] Benjamin Cáreces, CONALJUVE leader, interview, La Paz, 03/06/2016, Luis Flores Mendoza, member of the FEJUVE-El Alto 2003, interview, El Alto, 26/04/2016, Guido Mitma, executive secretary of the COB, interview La Paz, 05/10/2016.

demonstrating the intensification of the insertion in the global market of Bolivia as a producer of primary commodities and their low-value added derivatives.

Infrastructure Projects and the Aesthetics of Change

Infrastructure projects have formed an integral part of state formation under the MAS. Despite massive increases in productive investment by the MAS governments in their industrialisation attempts (mainly focused on the hydrocarbon and mining sectors),[147] the greatest amount of state expenditure was directed towards infrastructure projects.

Graph 5.5: Government Spending by Type



Source: INE 2018

As graph 5.5 shows, infrastructure expenditure by the government has been greater than its productive investment throughout the period of the MAS. Whereas the MAS only spent an average of 19.6 percent of government expenditure on productive investments between 2006 and 2016, it spent an average of 46.2 percent on infrastructure (and only 28.4 percent on social spending). This improved the conditions for natural resource extraction and, as the social conflicts over large-scale projects discussed below reveal, further cemented the image of the sublime nation progressing

[147] For a comprehensive overview of the industrialisation attempts of the MAS, see Arze (2014).

thanks to the sacrifice of the profane natural body of resources, flora and fauna. Apart from the new cable-car system in La Paz, most of this spending has concentrated on transport and energy infrastructure needed for megaprojects (INE 2018). This reflects a key facet in the NDP: the construction of vital infrastructure for the capital-intensive productive sectors of hydrocarbons and mining as to increase their production capacity and as such increase the amount of government revenue that can be distributed to the employment sectors (Bolivia 2006, 202).

The Initiative for the Integration of South America

The construction of infrastructure by the MAS has been part of a wider continental transportation infrastructure project initially led by Brazilian capital, the Initiative for the Integration of South American Region (IIRSA) (Bolivia 2006, 202, Fontana 2013a, 35, Zimmerer 2015, 320, Zibechi 2012). The IIRSA is a massive project that has shaped investment across South America, aiming to develop transport, including roads, waterways, ports, bioceanic corridors and railways; energy infrastructure such as hydroelectric dams; and communications (Svampa 2011, 413). The IIRSA was funded by the Brazilian Development Bank and was designed to

> create the conditions to facilitate transactions and trade across borders [that] would favour productive and commercial activities linked to extensive cattle ranching, large-scale agribusiness, the expansion of soybean monocultures and extraction of natural resources more generally in the region (Garcés 2013, 92).

Due to its geographical positioning at the centre of the continent, Bolivia is crossed by 5 of the 10 axes of the IIRSA (Zibechi 2012, 219). It occupies a key place in the proposed developments of IIRSA, with IIRSA's proponents presenting Bolivia as the future 'transit country of the subcontinent and central distributor of gas and other energies' (Molina 2005, 61, cited in Zibechi 2012, 220). The IIRSA was part of Brazil's attempt—driven by the interests of domestic capital—to reorganise the geopolitical region of South America and open up and connect the markets of the continent, simultaneously consolidating Brazil's dominant position as the regional powerhouse over its neighbouring countries, including Bolivia (Zibechi 2012, 220).

In Bolivia, the IIRSA has advanced under Morales, which in the long term seeks to construct a total of 49 megaprojects across the country (Salazar 2015, 276). Since the economic crisis that has enveloped the Brazilian economy in 2013, Chinese capital has become an increasingly important financier of infrastructure projects in the region. Investments from the Chinese state banks (China Export and Import Bank, Eximbank, and the Chinese Development Bank, CDB) and involvement of Chinese firms in development projects have become increasingly important to the region's development plans, with a new package of infrastructure investment deals between China and Bolivia cementing the importance of Chinese companies in the Bolivian economy (Escobar de Pabón et al. 2016, 113–14).[148] The social impacts of this massive increase in infrastructure construction have been a spate of conflicts resisting new rounds of displacement and accumulation by dispossession: the conflict over the construction over the highway through the Isiboro Sécure National Park and Indigenous Territory (TIPNIS), and more recently clashes over the proposed hydroelectric dams Bala-Chepete, the sites of which lie between the Madidi natural park and the Pilón Lajas reserve on the border of the departments of La Paz and Beni.

In short, the large-scale infrastructure projects undertaken by the MAS governments are a continuation of the economic model outlined by the 2006 NDP. They explicitly target the requirements of extractive sectors and reveal imbalance in power between the class conciliation attempted by the MAS governments, with the needs of capital clearly being placed above those of indigenous and non-indigenous peasants and labour. As a result, they have been the source of major social conflicts since the beginning of the second term of the MAS in 2010 as the government advances its neoextractivist agenda. Infrastructure projects have also etched the pathways of extraction in space, marking the places where Bolivia's profane natural body is sacrificed on the altar of progress for the good of the sublime Bolivian nation. Roads, bridges, railways and pipelines all cut lines through the country and away to foreign export markets, whilst dams create vast blue expanses that engulf everything upstream. These violent transformations mark the domination of the sublime over the profane through the lenses of resource extraction and national development.

[148] Chinese companies are in charge of implementing projects worth US$2 billion, the equivalent of 6 percent of the country's total GDP. This figure rises to US$9.5 billion when the loan tied to the contracting of Chinese firms from Eximbank to Bolivia is included (Escobar de Pabón et al. 2016, 114).

The Profanity and Sublimity of Evo Morales

The advancement of natural resource extraction and its accompanying infrastructure has sacrificed the natural body of Bolivia—Mother Earth [*pachamama*]—for the advancement of the Bolivian nation, in the process advancing state formation. This, coupled with the dialectical expression of civil society within political society, as social movements have been co-opted by the MAS government and assimilated into the state, has strengthened the state and its legitimacy as a central Leviathan at the heart of Bolivian society, even as it provokes conflict with some sectors of society. There is, however, another dynamic which has played salient roles in the processes of state formation under the MAS: the profanity-sublimity of Evo Morales himself as a component of statecraft. This section outlines this last facet of state formation and then ties in the aforementioned dynamics to argue that the MAS has been successful in promoting and strengthening the Bolivian state. However, there are also a number of contradictions present in these processes of state formation, as the state has become increasingly wedded to extractivism and dependent on the figure of Morales himself to maintain its legitimacy.

Profanity: Hermano Evo and a New Indigenous State

The president's simultaneous profanity and sublimity have been a crucial aspect of how the government has positioned Morales at the centre of their political project, the *proceso de cambio* (process of change). It has been a vital part of the political integration of social movements and state formation in the transformism stage of passive revolution. On the one hand, Evo Morales was a lowly campesino, the son of a llama herder who cultivated coca in the Chapare and fought alongside the *cocaleros* during their battles against coca eradication and neoliberalism during the 1990s.[149] Morales and the MAS combined Marxist and *indigenista* intellectual currents that emanated from radical social movements in an attempt to present themselves as representatives of historically marginalised people.[150] They present themselves as the

[149] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 04/04/2017.

[150] Laserna (2010) divided the MAS into neatly divided factions of marxist, *indigenista* and populist, which anthropologist Nancy Postero (2017, 34) has since argued are blurred but a useful way to look at the influences inside the MAS. However, neither author adequately explains why different ideologies have become so important in Bolivian politics and simply take such positions as *a priori* features of the coalition that forms the MAS.

'government of the humble people' which represents all Bolivians rather a select few,[151] a perspective reflected in the party motto '*Somos pueblo, somos MAS*' (We are the people, we are MAS/we are more) (Postero 2017, 33). Morales is a brother (*hermano* Evo) who still maintains some of the face-to-face relationships with social movements that Argentinian scholar Pablo Stefanoni (2006, 40) identified at the start of his presidency. Morales is also still the leader of the Coordinator of the Six Coca-Grower's Federations of Tropical Cochabamba and is someone who—as an infamous video of the president playing football revealed—makes mistakes just like the 'average' Bolivian.

Morales has also carefully presented himself as the archetypical indigenous person of the MAS, enabling him and the MAS to concurrently consolidate and take advantage of the transformation of indigeneity precipitated by the struggles outlined in the previous chapter. The election of Morales fostered (but also followed) a new sense of pride in people's indigenous roots, causing many—predominantly from urban areas—to rediscover their heritage whilst at the same time lifting the self-esteem of others who had been historically stigmatised because of their ethnicity (interview with Silvia Rivera in Kohl and Farthing 2014, 37). There have been open signs that the practices of the state have been at least tinted by indigeneity—be it Morales' Tiwanaku inauguration (Postero 2010), the government flying the indigenous flag (the chequered rainbow of the Wiphala) in Plaza Murillo or Bolivia's new satellite named Túpak Katari 1 (after the indigenous insurgent of the eighteenth century).

This shift in perception towards indigenous people has been (in part) reflected in the 2009 CPE. Despite the major limitations in the process of the AC, the constitution has been heralded for its efforts to advance the rights of indigenous peoples and incorporate their social and political perspectives into the state. The final document officially recognised *naciones y pueblos indígena originario campesinos* (indigenous originary peasant nations and peoples, IOC) (article 2) and 36 indigenous languages as official languages of the state (articles 5 and 234). Moreover, it became compulsory for civil servants to speak at least one of these languages as well as Spanish (Bolivia 2009). This, contends anthropologist Salvador Schavelzon (2012, 467), gave indigenous people, especially those from the largest Aymara and Quechua

[151] Christian Zeballos, 02/02/2017.

groups, an advantage in obtaining positions in public administration, increasing the number of indigenous state bureaucrats (Soruco 2015).

Changing the official languages of the state does more than merely recognising difference. It alters the functional specifications of public administrators and state employees, creating new constraints on the practices of state actors and offering new opportunities to subaltern groups to become state officials. As indigenous languages become part of the official bureaucracy, non-Spanish speaking (and largely rural) actors also gain unprecedented access to the state. As a result, the repeated practices of state actors and quotidian relations between citizens and the state are reshaped. Whilst the extent to which these changes have been felt is uneven, the veneer of the state has been transformed from an unfamiliar structure speaking a foreign language to a comprehendible part of society. Now citizens can speak to the state and, importantly, the state can speak to them, fostering consent in communities which previously had limited interactions with, and respect for, the state.

The category of the IOC has managed to reinforce the hegemonic representation of indigeneity as encompassing the bulk of the support bases of the MAS, whilst presenting the remaining groups under a similar minority-politics used by neoliberal multiculturalism in the 1990s. Uses of an indigeneity modelled on Morales' own projected indigenous identity by the MAS created the presumption that indigenous communities supported the government (Zimmerer 2015). Recognition, autonomy and access to state institutions became granted to those who would best fit the definition of IOC according to the MAS government.

Thus, through the image of Evo Morales, the MAS government has attempted to transform the appearance of the state from that of a foreign and distant entity into an integral part of plurinational Bolivia. As an 'indigenous' former coca farmer, the president ruptures the colonial and republican image of the state as from above and non-indigenous. By stressing *Hermano* Evo as one of the *pueblo* and a social movement leader, the MAS has tried to make the state relatable to previously marginalised groups, a strategy that proved more or less successful for the first decade of his presidency.

Sublimity: The President That Can Do No Wrong[152]

On the other hand, Evo Morales is presented as a pure, incorruptible figure working tirelessly for the good of the Bolivian people. In the words of POR-leader and left-wing critic of the MAS, José Luis Álvares, the government 'has made people believe that Evo Morales is a type of saint or apostle'.[153] The MAS has positioned Evo Morales as a figurehead of infrastructure projects, which despite provoking large-scale protests, have played a vital role in literally constructing the state. Projects are presented as if they were the result of hard toil by the president himself, and all the projects' publicity is accompanied by a picture of Morales. The spectacle of the state is performed by Evo through these infrastructure projects: new water projects are turned on by Morales, and tractors adorned with the president's face lined up in a stadium before being gifted by the president to participants of state-led development projects. As well as hydroelectric dams and highways, the central government has built synthetic football pitches, coliseums and schools across the country, trading political support for construction projects (Postero 2017, 140–41). Most of this construction has been under the auspices of the Bolivia Cambio Evo Cumple (Bolivia Changes, Evo Fulfils) project, which started in 2006 with initial financial support from Venezuela and other members of the Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America, ALBA) (Fontana 2013a, 31). Evo Cumple projects are tangible evidence of the state, its increasing role in people's lives and the government's efforts to support ordinary Bolivian people. They provide the proof that the 'nationalisation' of gas by the MAS has affected the lives of Bolivians across the country.

Furthermore, any problems with MAS policy or with political decisions of the government are not Evo's fault, but that of the *invitados* (invitees).[154] Following their surprise success in the 2002 elections, the MAS started to recruit middle class urban professionals and intellectuals—noticeably more *mestizo* or white than the movements that have formed the party's social base—into the party. Many government insiders argue that these invited intellectuals were essential in transforming the MAS from the 'political instrument' of rural campesinos and coca

[152] I would argue that this perspective has changed slightly since the re-election referendum of February 2016.
[153] Jose Luis Alvarez Beltrán, 08/03/2016.
[154] I found this perspective repeated by supporters and some critics of the government alike.

growers into a ruling party able to govern across the entire country (Contartese and Deledicque 2013, 61, Do Alto 2011, 104). Having given the majority of ministerial posts to representatives of social organisations in his first cabinet (see chapter 4), subsequent cabinet reshuffles since have gradually reduced the social organisation representation in government (Oikonomakis and Espinoza 2014, 295). By 2013, the majority of Morales' ministerial cabinet was comprised of *invitados*, as table 5.2 demonstrates:

Table 5.2: MAS Ministerial Cabinet 2013

Name	Ministry (date formed)	Relation to Social Organisation	Affiliation to Other Political Party	Other Information
Luis Arce	Economy	No	No	University Lecturer; Economist; Master's from UK
Juan Ramón Quintana	President	No	ADN—Minister of Defence under Hugo Banzer (1999–2002)	Sociologist (PhD UNED, Spain) and Military Leader
David Choquehuanca	External Relations	Indigenista Aymara Activist linked with the CSUTCB	No	NGOs
Carlos Romero	Government	No	No	Lawyer
Roberto Aguilar	Education	No	No	Rector UMSA
Ana Teresa Morales	Productive Development and Plural Economy	No	No	University Lecturer CIDES-UMSA; Economist
José Zamora	Environment and Water	No	No	NGOs
Arturo Sánchez	Public Works	No	No	University Lecturer CIDES-UMSA; Rural Economist
Rubén Saavedra	Defence	No	No	University Lecturer UMSA; Lawyer
Juan José Sosa	Hydrocarbons	No	No	YPFB; engineer
Nemesia Achacollo	Rural Development (2008–)	Bartolina Sisa	No	-

Juan Calvimontes	Health and Sports	No	No	Doctor; YPFB; Petrol Health Fund
Elva Viviana Caro	Development Planning	No	No	Master's in US
Daniel Santella	Work and Employment	COB	CONDEPA	-
Mario Virreira	Mining and Metallergy	COB	No	Rector UPEA; Civil Engineer
Claudia Peña	Autonomy (2009–)	No	No	Poet and Social Investigator
Pablo Groux	Culture (2009–)	No	MSM	Fundación Tierra; public functionary
Nardy Suxo	Transparency and Anti-Corruption (2009–)	No	No	Lawyer; Catholic University of Bolivia
Amanda Dávila	Communication (2011–)	No	No	Journalist

Source: Elaborated from Espinoza 2015, 144–46

By 2013, most *invitados* were not politicians who moved across from other political parties but trained professional technocrats drawn from the ranks of university lecturers (particularly economists), lawyers and public administrators. The most well known of these *invitados* is vice-president Álvaro García Linera, who together with Evo is supposed to represent the complementarity and duality of the 'two Bolivias' (Schavelzon 2012, 80). As Schavelzon's (2012, 80–83) detailed ethnography of the Constituent Assembly reveals, the *invitados* (and particularly García Linera through REPAC) played an important role in the dynamics of writing the constitution,[155] and with each further Morales administration the proportion of social movement representatives and MAS militants has decreased vis-à-vis the *invitados*.

The MAS has actively presented the *invitados* as 'opportunists', in the words of ex-MAS minister Antonia Rodríguez, that 'damage us'.[156] As a prominent member of the MAS government, Jorge Silva, Municipal Councillor of La Paz, states:

> The *invitados* are not wedded to the project nor Evo… and say that they have been invited for their merits and that they are not *MASistas* nor revolutionaries nor of the *proceso* nor Evistas but

[155] See also Garcés 2013.
[156] Antonia Rodríguez, 20/07/2016.

> professionals. So, they do not feel the love for their colours. It is like playing for a football team. You have to love the shirt to defend it.[157]

The *invitados* are presented by MAS politicians and activists as the *only* political error made by Evo Morales, a single mistake that can be used to explain away the contradictions at the heart of the MAS government.[158] An activist from El Alto, Mariana Pensalla, explains:

> His ministers do not inform Evo well, they tell him that everything's fine, everything's better but it is not like that. So, sometimes we as leaders would like it if the president spoke with us leaders to convey to him our point of view. At times the ministers do not inform him on what is happening and tell him what we need him to know.[159]

The *invitados*, in a sense then, reflect the sublimity of the state itself (see Hansen and Stepputat 2005), its illegibility in the mind of many Bolivians, who assume that Morales' profanity—as an indigenous person, one of the *pueblo*—also inhibits his ability to fully comprehend the magic of the state's actions. Through the prism of the *invitados*, policies that have accommodated capital above labour and have formed the bedrock of the political project of the MAS governments could be rectified and overcome if only Morales knew the truth.

One example serves to illustrate how the government has used the *invitados* in practical terms as a political manoeuvre. The *gasolinazo* [roughly translated as 'The Big Gas Hit'] of December 2010 was the first popular protest against the MAS government's policies towards natural resources and the largest urban protests witnessed in the past 10 years. The conflict started when, encouraged by the IMF, García Linera announced the government would be removing the national gas subsidy (Webber 2014b, 326), increasing the price of transport fuel by between 73 percent and 99 percent virtually overnight (Mokrani and Uriona Crespo 2011, 122).

Across the country protests arose in defence of the subsidy demanding the annulation of the decree and the reinstatement of fuel subsidies (Fontana 2013b, 205). The subsequent protests forced the government to abrogate the decree a mere six

[157] Jorge Silva, 26/09/2016.
[158] Guido Mitma, 05/10/2016.
[159] Mariana Pensalla, 30/06/2016.

days after its introduction, with Evo Morales using his New Year's Eve message to reassure the Bolivian people:

> in my oath I promised to govern for the Bolivian people, I have listened to my comrades who have said to me that although it is important, now is not the moment [to eliminate fuel subsidies] (cited in La Nación 2011).

Morales was outside the country on official business when García Linera announced the cuts to gas subsidies. It was never going to be a popular decision, and as one of the *invitados* García Linera was charged with giving the bad news. When the extent of popular protest and resistance to the changes became apparent Morales stepped in as the saviour, begging forgiveness for the errors of his ministers that had occurred in his absence.

Profane and Sublime State Formation

The profane-sublime nature of Evo Morales has had a number of implications for both the political project of the MAS government and processes of state formation in Bolivia over the past decade. Firstly, it has enabled the MAS government to contain the class contradictions that lie at the heart of pursuing an accumulation strategy through natural resource extraction led by private capital and distributing this rent through modest social redistribution programmes. I have already outlined how and why social movements were integrated into the state by the MAS in the government's first term, changing from offensive movements pushing for social transformation beyond the state into defensive movements protecting their accumulated gains obtained through the formalised processes of the AC and 'nationalisation' of natural gas. The profane-sublime elements of Morales have helped maintain the illusion that he is of the people and for the people, and offers the best possible hope of achieving gains for the working-classes and other marginalised groups in Bolivia. This has sustained support for Morales despite limited success in delivering promises of social transformation drawn from the demands of social movements, minimal transformation of the economy, the failure of industrialisation projects led by the state and the corruption scandals that have plagued all three of Morales' administrations.

Secondly, it has re-legitimised the state itself and orientated many working classes and subaltern sectors throughout the country towards the state. *Hermano* Evo

and the state have been positioned as the route to a better life for Bolivians. In other words, the processes described above have produced a state affect among the working-classes and indigenous groups, transforming the state into the entity able to fulfil their desires and needs. For example, rural indigenous movements have turned to the state to claim rights, autonomy and justice, with 12 municipalities voting to become indigenous autonomies following the new CPE.[160] Sectors of the working-classes affiliated with the COB work with the government on a wide-range of issues from health and safety regulations to labour law reforms.[161] Even those critical of the MAS within the COB look towards the state to fulfil their desires, as the criticisms of the government's inability to industrialise demonstrate. Surprisingly, the market guilds have looked towards the state to resolve their problems in certain situations, as the words of Enrique Gonzalo Alba of the 18 Associations of the Rotonda reveal:

> We told Evo "come, we are going to inform you about the true reality". We are going to tell you the truth that your ministers, your vice-ministers are mistaken. This way we will tell you how things are and how they are not". But he never let us. Three or four times we travelled to La Paz but he never saw us.[162]

Alba returned to La Paz three or four times to try and see Evo, despite being the leader of market vendors attempting to construct a new market independently of the state (see chapter 7). This continued endurance of the notion that a meeting with Evo would solve the problems of a small group of vendors in a marginal marketplace in the city of Santa Cruz encapsulates how the sublime and profane nature of Morales has re-legitimised the state. For Alba and his colleagues, Evo contains the cluster of promises that, if realised, would lead to the completion of their project, and so they attempted at first to follow a political strategy that positioned themselves as close to Evo as possible. The *gremiales* from Plan 3000 are not alone in this regard, and social organisations from the COB to the FEJUVE often lament meetings with the government where Evo is not present, frustrated both at the lack of proximity to the

[160] These processes have, understandably, attracted a lot of attention from scholars. See in particular Albó 2015, Augsburger and Haber 2018, Cameron 2013, Farthing and Kohl 2014, Postero 2017, Tockman 2017, Tockman and Cameron 2014, Tockman, Cameron and Plata 2015.
[161] Valerio Ayaviri Lazaro, 07/07/2016.
[162] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 04/04/2017.

president and with the ministers who do not report the content of meetings back to Morales accurately.

Thirdly, and following from the last point, the sublimity-profanity of Morales has concentrated the gains of the MAS within the president himself. The sublimity and profanity of Morales accompanied mechanisms within the AC designed to channel the energy and support of the social movements into the MAS and the new constitution. As a result, the liberal state regained the legitimacy it had lost during the crises of the late-1990s onwards. Moreover, though the new constitution 'refounded' Bolivia, the underlying presidential political regime remained intact (albeit with some new political institutions) (Tapia 2011, 179). Morales' parliamentary majority, coupled with the fact that the judiciary and the Senate were controlled by traditional economic and political opposition (Farthing and Kohl 2014, 34),[163] means that power under Morales has been further concentrated in the executive over and above the other branches of government (Tapia 2011, 176).[164]

When Tapia was writing in 2011, the scope of the political ramifications of this tendency remained to be seen, and many authors in the following years predicted the continued importance of organisations operating along different lines of logic to the state. However, the fallout of the 2016 re-election campaign has revealed a political vacuum around Evo. As of the end of 2018, no possible future leaders within the MAS have emerged, and the formal political arena remains divided, with the main political competitors coming from the old neoliberal parties (e.g., Rúben Costas, Samuel Dorria Medina, Carlos Mesa, Tuto Quiroga). Beyond formal politics there have been instances of social movement activism, but it has lacked the radicalism and dynamism of prior movements. Social organisations such as the COB and the FEJUVE-El Alto remain divided and restricted (if not entirely controlled) by government supporters.

From the perspective of the MAS, part of the problem is that through the profanity and sublimity of Morales, the *proceso de cambio* has become almost exclusively Evo's project. Evo in the eyes of many is personally responsible for the changes since 2006, as the words of MAS activist Christian Estebes demonstrate:

[163] The MAS came to power with only 12 out of the 27 seats in Senate. Moreover, most of the sitting judges had been appointed by Sánchez de Lozada and his MNR party (Farthing and Kohl 2014, 35).
[164] The expanded use of supreme (presidential) decrees is an outward sign of this tendency.

> I am very thankful to our president because Bolivia has changed and now we are not poor…we are not poor thanks to our president Evo Morales.[165]

For many, without Evo Morales these changes evaporate, gains that have come to be understood as not won by social movement radicalism but as gifted by the great *hermano* Evo himself.

The profanity and sublimity of Evo Morales has thus had a significant impact on processes of state formation in Bolivia over the decade following his election. It has helped the MAS garner significant popular support and to win two subsequent elections with a majority of the vote, containing the class contradictions of their development plan for longer than many of their Pink Tide counterparts. It has also re-legitimised the Bolivian state, which following the crisis of neoliberalism lost the ability to govern the Bolivian population and ensure the conditions of capital accumulation in the country. Lastly, this has had the effect of embodying the gains of the MAS government in the figure of Evo Morales, leading to a political impasse encapsulated by the re-election referendum of February 2016.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to trace the impact of three central dynamics of state formation during transformism, the second phase of passive revolution, under MAS governments. Firstly, I have critically examined the relationship between social movements and the MAS government during the government's first term. I explored the ways that social movements were aligned with the MAS government becoming Morales' social base. Whilst social movement leaders at all levels of social organisation have been co-opted through *prebendos* (political bribes), through sketching the constituent assembly process and by the unfolding of the right-wing autonomy movement, I sought to show that the alignment of rank-and-file actors was a complex process that was simultaneously enacted from above by the state managerialism of the MAS, and from below as the conjuncture and conflict with the lowlands elites forced social movements to defend the MAS government.

Secondly, I demonstrated how the economic policy of the MAS laid out in the 2006 Plan Nacional de Desarrollo has been implemented through nationalisation of

[165] Chrsitian Estebes, 15/07/2016.

key sectors, industrialisation attempts largely focussing on capital intensive sectors and infrastructure investment. The division of the economy into profit generating sectors and employment-generating sectors and policies concentrating on fostering the former and transferring increased state revenues captured by the state into the latter, has consolidated Bolivia's insertion into global markets as a producer of primary commodities and their low valued-added derivatives. The natural profane body of hydrocarbons (and the bio-diverse zones of rainforest where some resources are found) have been increasingly slated as environmental zones that need to be sacrificed for the good of the sublime (idea of the) Bolivian nation,[166] concurrently legitimising the state and galvanising socio-environmental conflicts in certain parts of the country.

Finally, I examined processes of state formation under Evo Morales. I particularly focused on two aspects of these processes, the role of infrastructure in literally concretising the state, and how the government has used Evo Morales' concurrent sublimity and profanity to consolidate the state. Infrastructure projects announced with state spectacles and inexorably linked with the president himself—Evo does, after all, *cumple* (deliver) so Bolivia changes—have been important in making the state and the gains from nationalisation of hydrocarbons appear in people's everyday lives. On the one hand, the fact that Evo is of the people makes him, and consequently the state, closer in proximity and more relatable. On the other hand, Evo's sublimity makes him virtually an apostle, not at fault for the government's errors. This has helped maintain the legitimacy of Morales and the state even as the contradictions of the economic programme of the MAS were starting to appear following the end of the commodities boom in 2011. It has also led to a political impasse where new leaders and movements are unable to break onto the political scene, which is still dominated by politicians from the neoliberal era. In order to better understand how these processes have been experienced from below, I now turn to two ethnographic case studies—El Alto and Plan 3000, Santa Cruz—to explore their quotidian experiences.

[166] See Lerner (2012) on Sacrifice Zones.

Chapter 6

El Alto, Forgotten City: Local Experiences of the MAS Government

The School of Political Formation (SPF) was situated in the Ceja, a thriving commercial centre, in the centre of El Alto.[167] The Ceja is comprised of a warren-like maze of thoroughfares lined with small street stalls [*puestos*] selling a wide-range of consumer goods. On my way to the SPF, I would pass fruit and vegetables laid out on blue tarpaulins that encroached into my path as I wandered down these alleyways, always needing to duck to avoid the makeshift awnings fashioned from the same material. A woman positioned her cart filled with spices at a fork in the path, their colours, then smells never failing to catch my attention. Female vendors sat between huge sacks of coca leaves, their knitting in their laps and a set of scales to hand close by. Before meetings I would always stop and buy a quarter kilo of coca leaves along with some mint-flavoured *lejía* (literally bleach), the catalyst that brings the most out of the leaves when chewed. Coca was a good conversation starter, something to share that helped build the initial bonds between me as a foreign researcher and the local attendees. The meetings themselves were situated on the third floor of a newly constructed white *cholet,* a prime example of the neo-Andean building style that has become synonymous with the emergent commercial bourgeoisie of El Alto (discussed in more detail below).[168]

This chapter explores the contingencies of processes of state formation, class formation and the production of space at the quotidian level, the contradictory and counterintuitive ways that the broadly defined indigenous working–classes in the city of El Alto have experienced the *proceso de cambio*. Transformism has allowed the MAS government to maintain political legitimacy and stave off mass protest despite employment structures largely being left unaltered and the quality of employment opportunities in the city remaining poor. In place of widespread protests of the kind that shifted the political landscape in 2003, now *alteños* have been orientated towards the state as an agent of change. It is worth reiterating here that by ‘experience’ I do

[167] The Ceja (literally the eyebrow) is on the rim of the bowl overlooking La Paz at the end of the La Paz-El Alto highway. It is a commercial hub and the social (if not geographical) centre of El Alto.
[168] The name *cholet is* 'a witty combination of *cholo*—urban indigenous—and chalet' (Postero 2017, 147)

not mean free-floating cultural or ideological perspectives that exist outside the material world, but the 'values, norms and cultural forms' that are always present in and accompany different economic processes and relations at different historical moments (Wood 1995, 62). These are produced by confrontations between the logic of capitalism and what E.P. Thompson (1978, 155) called the 'moral economy' of the subaltern classes.

I have chosen the MAS School of Political Formation in the city of El Alto, which I attended between June and November 2016, as the site to reveal some of the everyday aspects of the MAS government. There are several reasons why I feel that this is a good place to investigate some of the difficulties of how people have experienced the progressive government of Evo Morales. Firstly, the School took place in the commercial centre of La Ceja, one of the hubs of the popular economy. Indeed, many of the School's participants were those who lived and worked in the informal street markets, operating in the grey areas between legality and illegality in what some anthropologist call the 'cracks of the state',[169] The popular economy is only influenced, not constrained, by government regulation thus offering an interesting entry point into the relationship between the state and the popular economy. Secondly, despite the attendees of the School being *MASistas*, the questions and comments offered by participants reveal a critical, contradictory and conditional support for the MAS government (if unconditional support for the *proceso de cambio*) that is not captured in existing accounts of the relationship between social organisations and the MAS government. It offers a window into the functioning of informal contestory regimes, as participants use their label as militants of El Alto to make demands of the government. Although many SPF participants had not attended lectures or events of that kind beforehand, their interactions and questions did, I argue, reflect the everyday experiences with the MAS government, and reveal the nature of the relationships between rank-and-file MAS supporters and the government in El Alto. As such, through an analysis of the SPF, this chapter explores the quotidian dimensions of the *proceso de cambio* and working-class experiences of the MAS government from the perspective of the city of El Alto.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. Firstly, I outline the demographics of El Alto and the political economic dynamics, including new processes of capital

[169] See Matthews et al. 2012, Tassi et al. 2013, Tassi et al. 2015.

accumulation and class formation in the city's popular economy. Secondly, I outline the logic and goals behind the MAS SPF. Thirdly, I use the SPF to explore experiences of transformism, the spatial unevenness of the politics of the MAS and changing experiences of class in El Alto. In doing so I advance two interconnected arguments. My main argument is that processes of transformism in El Alto have been irregular, fluid and always partial, meaning that processes of co-optation and pacification are in constant need of renewal from above. The MAS has been unable to contain the ideological contradictions at its heart, and *alteños* are critical of their experiences of *being co-opted* by the government. A corollary follows from this: that experiences of the MAS government have been spatially irregular and variable, leading many *alteños* to frame El Alto as a 'forgotten city'. Residents compare the development of El Alto with the cities of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz, as well as the outer city districts with the older city core, to highlight national discrepancies in public works and demand government action. These discussions simultaneously reveal the pacifying effects of transformism and the potential for further future protest.

Class Formations and Processes of Capital Accumulation in El Alto

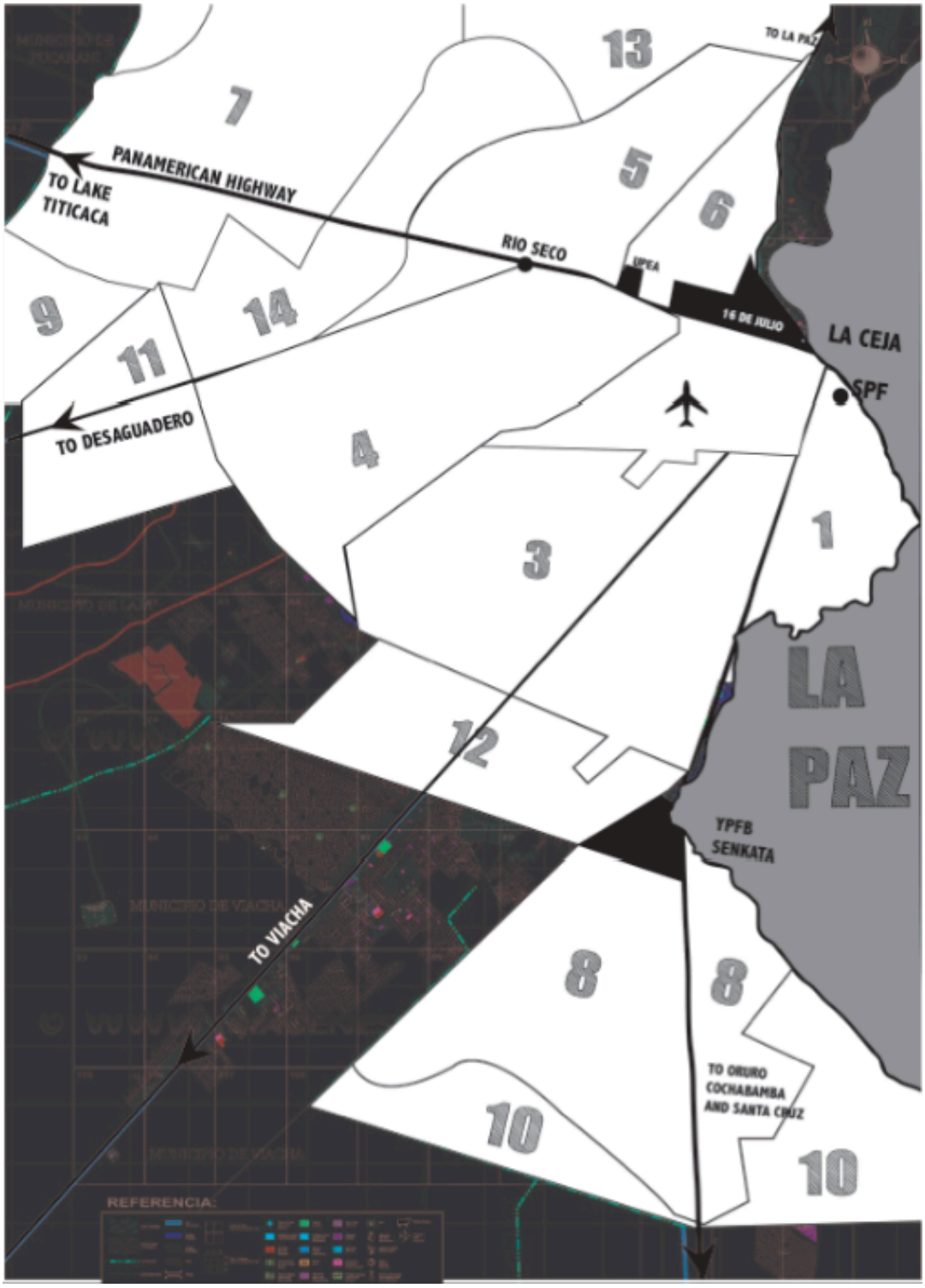
The spaces of the Ceja and El Alto more widely are a result of historic processes of self-construction and the dynamics of the popular economy that emerged during the 1990s. However, as the newly constructed *cholet* reveals, El Alto is not the same city it was under neoliberal governments (1985–2005), and new forms of capital accumulation and class stratification have emerged under the Evo Morales government. These dynamics need to be delineated if we are to comprehend the spaces of the markets I described above and the social composition of the SPF attendees.

As anthropologists from the Popular Economy School remind us, the economy of El Alto is complex, and the difficulty in mapping out and analysing the variety of the *alteña* economy is significant (Tassi et al. 2013, 92). However, it is worth attempting to outline the general patterns in production, commerce and social reproduction present in official statistics and other studies, while noting the likely large margin of error present in the figures displayed here.

According to the 2012 census, the population of El Alto is 848,000, although given both the underestimation of the size of households and the omission of entire

new neighbourhoods from the census—residential zones that are represented as empty spaces on the official maps (see figure 6.1)—the actual population is likely to be significantly higher.

Figure 6.1: Map of El Alto



Source: Alejandra Rocabado

The quickest growing regions are districts 7, 8 and 14 along the two principal highways—the Pan-American Highway going to Lake Titicaca, and the road going south towards Oruro, Cochabamba and eventually Santa Cruz. These areas are the poorest and have the lowest access to basic services. As of 2018, 36 percent of *alteños* live below the official poverty line and according to the 2012 census, 49 percent of *alteños* are indigenous (46 percent Aymara and 2 percent Quechua) (INE 2012).[170] As table 6.1 demonstrates, there has been a significant improvement in recorded *alteño* household services between the 2001 and 2012 censuses (see table 6.1).

Table 6.1: Household Services in the City of El Alto

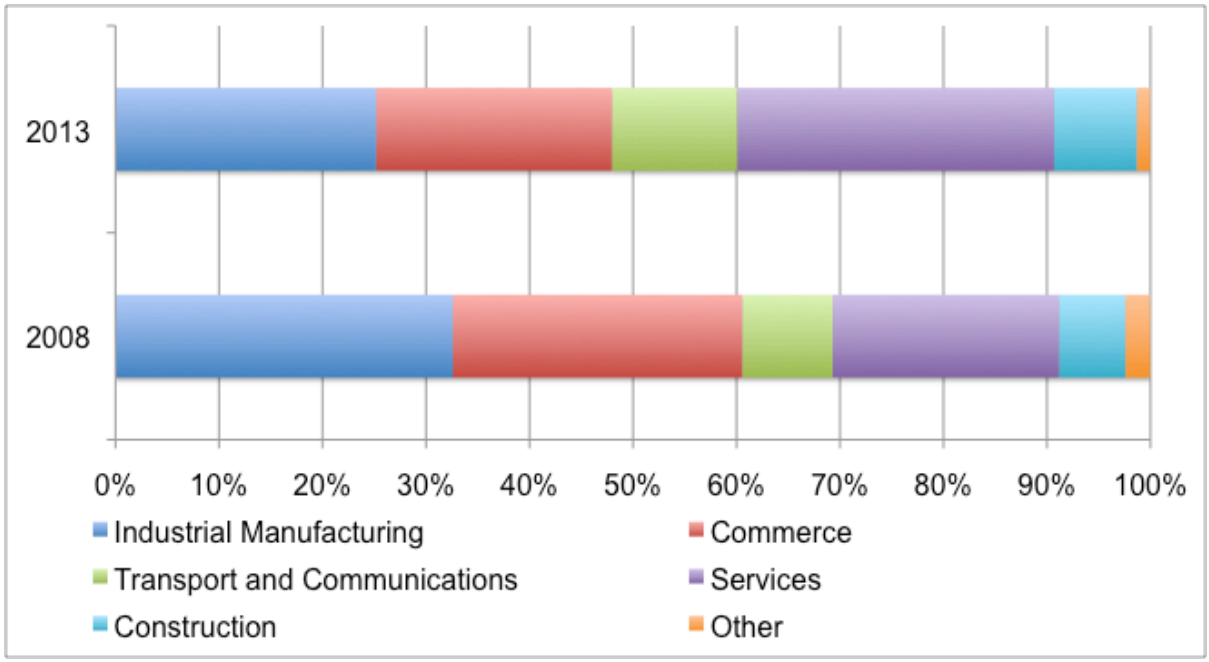
El Alto (%)	2001 Census	2012 Census
House made of Brick	22	54
House made of Adobe	77	45
Water service (in house)	35	88
Water service (out of house)	54	6
Household without access to basic services	16	n/a
Household with electricity	85	92
Household with gas	91	95
All basic needs satisfied	37	n/a

Source: Adapted from INE 2001 and 2012

Officially, over 50 percent of houses are now constructed from brick, 88 percent have in-house water services, 92 percent electricity and 95 percent gas. However, it must be noted that the newest neighbourhoods are excluded from this data, much in the same way that they are merely blank spots on the map. The white space in the middle of the city is the airport (see figure 6.1), a constant reminder of El Alto's unplanned nature and its rapid growth of the past four decades.

[170] This is a massive decrease from the 2001 census when 81 percent self-identified as indigenous (74 percent Aymara and 6 percent Quechua). See discussions in the first chapter for debates around the radical decrease in reported indigenous groups between the 2001 and 2012 censuses.

Graph 6.1: Occupation by Economic Activity



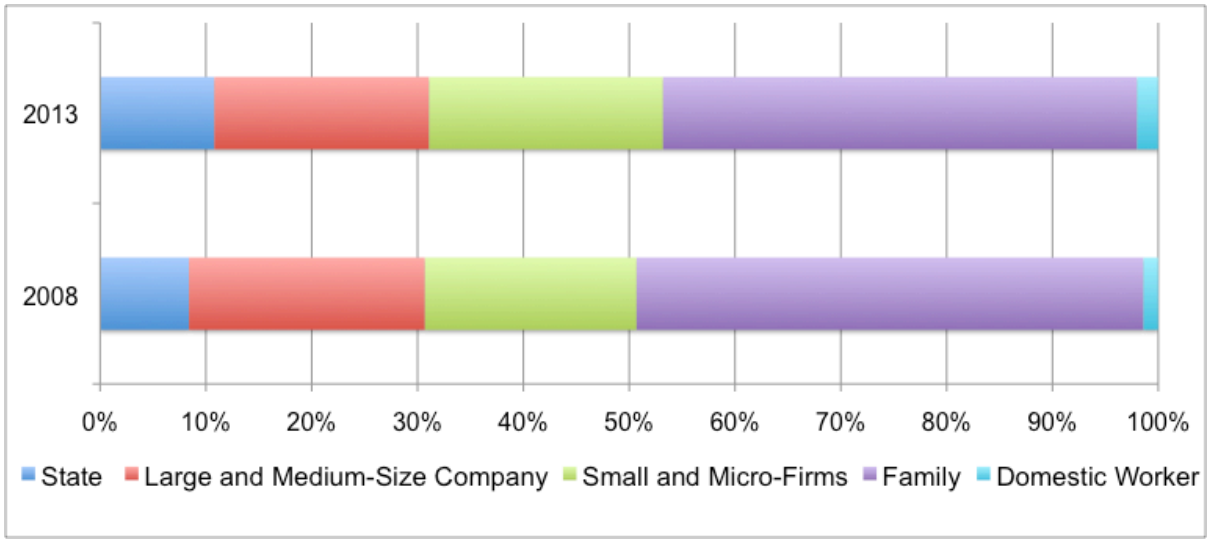
Source: Escóbar de Pabón 2015, 53

As graph 6.1 demonstrates, most residents in El Alto are employed in services (31%) followed by industrial manufacturing (25%), commerce (23%), and transport and communications (8.7). The big change over the past decade has been the growth of service employment, overtaking both industrial manufacturing and commerce to become the most significant source of employment (see graph 6.1). On the one hand, women dominate commerce (51% of economically active women aged 15–24 work in commerce) and are more likely to work in services linked to reproductive roles, particularly due to the growth of the restaurant sector in the city in recent years.[171] However, a quarter of economically active women aged 15–24 still work in industrial manufacturing. Young economically active men (15–24), on the other hand, are more likely to work in manufacturing (36%), services (25%), transport (20%) and construction (14%) (Escóbar de Pabón et al. 2015, 54). The quality of this work has not changed dramatically under Morales and remains low, with over 22 percent of the

[171] The CEDLA data only differentiates by gender for the age group 15–24, a group which is more like to work in manufacturing and commerce and less likely to work in services (Escóbar de Pabón et al. 2015, 53). However, the figures illustrate the general trends in the gendered organisation of the labour market.

EAP working for informalised semi-firms and almost 45 percent working for a family firm (see graph 6.2).

Graph 6.2: Occupation by Type of Employer (2008–2013)



Source: Escóbar de Pabón et al. 2015, 60

Unsurprisingly given these employment trends, formalised work with an official salary only accounts for 45 percent of all employment in El Alto (Escóbar de Pabón et al. 2015, 57). There is still a significant sexual division of unpaid labour within the home that assigns women nearly the entire burden of social reproduction. They are responsible for most unpaid household tasks, including cooking, cleaning and care activities, a division of labour that impacts on their ability to perform paid work and that structures the job opportunities available for women in El Alto (Escóbar de Pabón et al. 2015, 56).

Experiences of Working-Class Organisation in El Alto

The working-classes are hardly a disorganised mass in El Alto, and are arranged by several important social organisations that act as mediators between labour and both capital and the state. In many cases, these social organisations assume the responsibility of social service provision and the construction of abstract space—roles usually associated with the state—in the face of a historically absent or weak state. They are thus important sites of interaction with the state for working-class people and themselves influence and shape experiences of class formation and state formation

in El Alto. There are four main types of social organisations examined in this thesis: (1) labour unions; (2) neighbourhood associations; (3) market guilds; and (4) transport unions. Whilst important nationally, labour unions and their labour central, the COB, have limited significance in El Alto due to the predominance of the informalised nature of work in the commercial and services sectors of the popular economy.[172] The other three, however, are a vital aspect of dynamics in the city, and so this section sketches out their institutional arrangement and relations with the state at different levels.

Firstly, the city is organised through the resident organisation, the FEJUVE-El Alto. As of 2016, FEJUVE-El Alto was comprised of 14 sub-FEJUVEs mapped onto the sub-municipal districts of the city of El Alto and some 800 *juntas vecinales* (neighbourhood associations).[173] Neighbourhood associations are formed as migrants settle in the city and help divide land or distribute land plots and petition the municipal government for basic services. They also replace the state in certain situations and help organise neighbours to build plazas, schools or roads, or subvert existing state services in order to force the state to improve provision in a particular neighbourhood. Each sub-FEJUVE organises the neighbourhood associations in their district and produces a Programa de Operaciones Anuales (Annual Operating Programme, POA) proposing future public works projects in their area. The POA is then presented to the sub-municipal government, who decide in coordination with the municipal government for the entire city which projects are going to be constructed. For example, a block without electricity might accept that to demand electricity for all houses on the block would be unrealistic and so denied if presented as such in the POA. Neighbours would thus only initially demand street lighting around the road circumventing the houses. Once installed, each neighbour would run a cable out of their house to the street lighting, connecting their house to the electricity grid. The neighbourhood council would then speak to the municipal government, highlighting the electricity lost through this arrangement and thus encouraging formal connection to the grid for neighbourhoods, who express their desire to pay for the service whilst bemoaning the

[172] I have argued elsewhere that the COB has proved incapable of representing the informalised hidden wage-labour of the popular economy, as much for political as for structural reasons (see McNelly 2018).

[173] Ignacio Renán Cabezas, Transport Secretary, FEJUVE-El Alto, interview, El Alto, 20/04/2016.

lack of opportunity to do so.[174] This may explain why the water and electricity systems in El Alto are so wasteful and inefficient (see Farthing 2016 on the water network).

Figure 6.2: FUJUVE-El Alto Out in Force, June 2016

Source: Author's photo

The construction of projects is purportedly the most important aspect of the FEJUVE-El Alto and its principal role. However, there is some disagreement about what the scope of the organisation and its relationship with the state should be. Arturo Quispe, who works in the La Paz municipal government, argues that the FEJUVE should not be confrontational but should always work with the government, whoever is in power, to obtain the best results for the people of a municipality.[175] In practical terms, this is not easy in Bolivia, and it is particularly difficult in El Alto given the history of clientelism during the 1990s and the political strategy of co-optation of social organisations by the MAS (see chapter 4). Often in El Alto, municipal projects and government funds are exchanged for political support, politicising the neighbourhood associations and transforming their leadership into representatives of political parties

[174] Author's fieldnotes.
[175] Arturo Quispe, functionary, municipal government of La Paz, interview, La Paz, 02/06/2016

not their bases. The result in El Alto has been the division of the FEJUVE-El Alto into two rival factions: one MAS-aligned, the other rebellious/linked to the mayor Soledad Chapetón's party, Unidad Nacional (UN).[176] This has led to a complex political terrain whereby local leadership is instrumentally and opportunistically manipulating, on the one hand, their relationship with their bases and, on the other hand, with political elites of different political parties.

Secondly, market vendors and ambulant traders (small scale merchants who either have a permanent stall or lay their wares on the street) are organised through market *gremios* or guilds. Associations are organised by geographic location in the market or by product sold, and integrated into the regional and national federations (Buechler and Buechler 1996, 140). Many are loosely affiliated with the Central Obrera Regional (Worker's Regional Central, COR-El Alto) but their organisational structure is difficult to decipher and does not determine all of the everyday practices of their bases and dynamics of the markets of the popular economy. However, they can reach high levels of formalisation and have the power to prevent taxation, sanction and physically expel members (Tassi et al. 2013, 126). These organisations coordinate and regulate activities in the popular economy, demonstrating that the informal economy is not free of rules, regulations and bureaucracy.

Market vendors have a fluid and complex relationship with the state. On the one hand, they want to be free of externally determined state rules, regulations and taxes and have the ability self-organise away from the state. Indeed, such is their power vis-à-vis the state that the vendors of the massive market 16 de Julio in El Alto will only negotiate with Evo himself.[177] On the other hand, one of the many demands and worries of vendors that I spoke to on my travels through El Alto was access to healthcare and the inclusion of the market guilds into the health fund (La Caja Nacional de Salud, CNS). As such, one of the major struggles of *alteño* traders at the moment is to be included in state or state-affiliated programs. Despite the ambiguous nature of

[176] Oppositional candidate Soledad Chapetón, of UN, was elected in the 2015 municipal elections. Local elections in El Alto have often been used to voice discontent with the central government and Chapetón's election was linked to local events and particularly the corruption of former MAS mayor Edgar Patana. The exact position of the oppositional FEJUVE-El Alto is complex and at times contradictory. The MAS faction claims it was organised by Chapetón and her party, the UN. However, my interviews revealed that a number of revolutionary activists from 2003 were trying to form an autonomous organisation in the spirit of the October Agenda whilst at the same time some members were funded or sponsored by the UN (laptop bags with the party insignia were the obvious signs of this at this FEJUVE's meetings).
[177] Nico Tassi, anthropologist, CIS, interview, La Paz, 11/05/2016.

their relationship with the state, market guilds are important nexuses of state-civil society relations in El Alto. In many instances they replace the state 'in various regulatory functions that include the distribution of sales permits, maintenance and organisations of stalls and street cleaning' (Tassi et al. 2013, 124, see also Lazar 2008, ch.8).

Thirdly, the city's informal transport network is organised through a series of transport unions affiliated with the Federación Andina de Transporte (Andean Transport Federation). Unlike in Santa Cruz or (to a lesser extent) La Paz, all transport in El Alto is organised through these unions; transport cooperatives do not exist in the city. These unions are responsible for organising the legions of minibuses, *trufis* and taxis in the city into routes that serve the *alteña* population.[178] Each union might have up to 40 'groups' of 40–50 different types of vehicles assigned to routes by the Central Unica de Transporte Urbano de Pasajeros La Paz (Unique Urban Transport Central of La Paz, CUTUP). The CUTUP is in charge of meeting with neighbourhood associations demanding extension or alteration of routes, designing the routes to maximise the number of demands met, and liaising with the municipal government to confirm and legalise the routes.[179] The transport unions are also similarly structured in inter-municipal and inter-provincial transport.

The CUTUP thus plays a salient role in service provision in La Paz and El Alto, needing to maintain good relations with different levels of the state. The transport unions are thus possibly even more politically ambivalent than the market guilds and are careful not to stake out a public political position. Many of the union buildings have been constructed through the central government's 'Evo Cumple' infrastructure plan, yet the day-to-day functioning of the routes is dependent on good relations with the local municipal authorities. The only interview material that I cannot use, and my only anonymous sources all came from this sector, and generally leaders were suspicious of questions about political leaders or positions.

[178] A *trufi* is a ride share in a taxi that seats 5 to 8 people and follows set routes like a minibus. The fares are fixed at 3 BOB.
[179] Freddy Francisco Quispe Ontojo, president of the CUTUP, interview, La Paz, 05/12/2016.

Companies and Sectors of Accumulation in El Alto

The three largest GDP producing sectors, as table 6.2 demonstrates, are reportedly manufacturing (26.9%), commerce (13.5%) and transport (11.2%).

Table 6.2: Economic Structure of El Alto and La Paz (% of Total GDP)

Activity	**La Paz**	**El Alto**
Agriculture	0.5	1.1
Extractivism	2.8	5
Manufacturing	12.1	26.9
Electricity, Gas and Water	0.3	2
Construction	2.5	4.4
Commerce	6.9	13.5
Hotels and Restaurants	2.4	2.7
Transport	5.9	11.2
Communications	3.2	0.9
Financial Services	12.5	3.9
Company Services	3.2	1.8
Housing Property	13	2.1
Public Administration	29.5	0
Domestic, Personal and Social Services	5.1	3.9

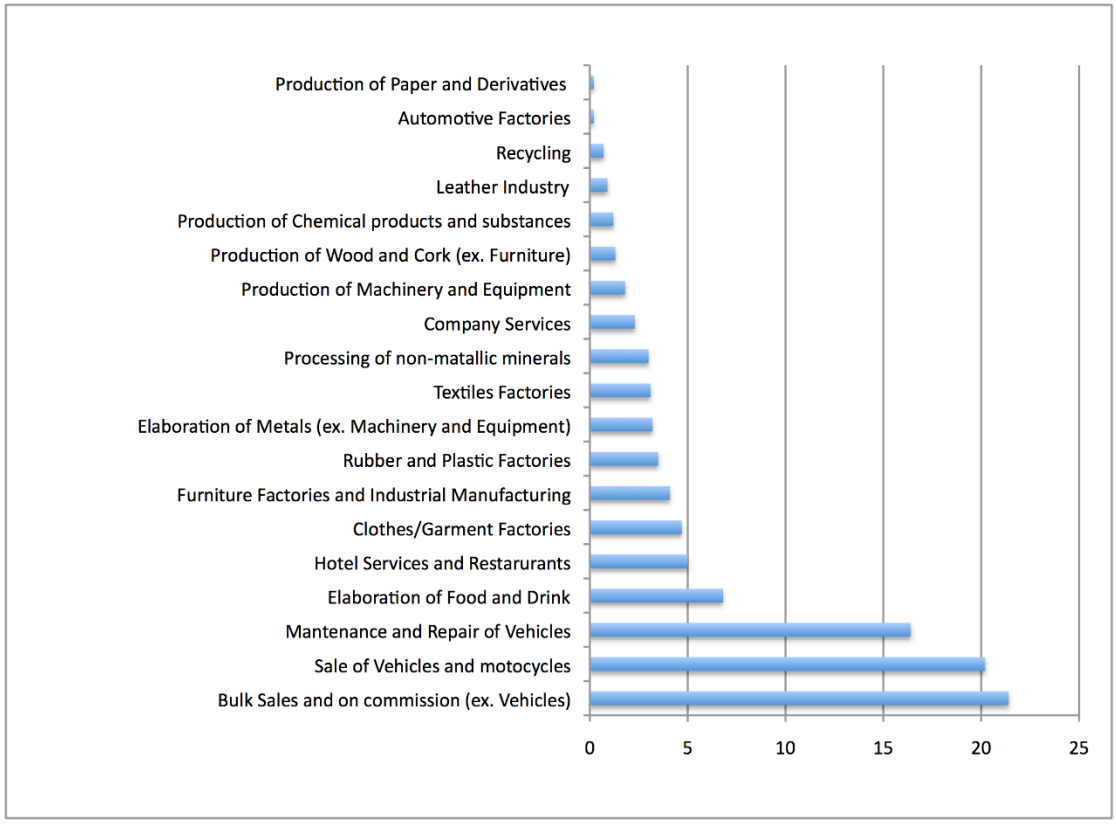
Source: UNDP 2015, 77

The deindustrialisation of parts of La Paz (particularly the area to the north of the Paceña Beer Factory along the El Alto-La Paz highway) during the neoliberal period brought some industries to El Alto, which is recognised as an industrial city and a principal location of medium and small-scale enterprises in the country. The old industrial park in the south of the city has attracted the presence (higher relatively than other Bolivian cities) of large firms of over 50 employees and of medium-size firms of between 15 and 50 people (Escóbar de Pabón 2015, 92). They find El Alto a good location because of its improving transport infrastructure providing access to the rest of the country and its proximity to the Peruvian and Chilean borders (and consequently to their seaports).[180] However, despite the Department Council of Industry counting

[180] The government has built a new highway to Oruro and is in the process of updating the Panamerican highway, both of which pass through El Alto.

over 5,000 manufacturing firms in total across El Alto in 2004, 7.9 percent were small companies (5–14 employees), 1 percent were medium-size enterprises and only 0.7 percent were large-scale firms (Escóbar de Pabón 2015, 92).[181] In contrast, 90.4 percent of manufacturing firms were micro-firms of less than 5 employees, which in turn are largely semi-companies where employees do both administrative and productive tasks.

Graph 6.3: Principal Economy Activity of Companies in El Alto, 2015 (% of total companies)



Source: Escóbar de Pabón 2015, 94

According to a CEDLA study of over 1500 companies in El Alto, all the city's large companies operate in the industrial manufacturing sector (Escóbar de Pabón et al. 2015, 93). Although they produce 65 percent of value added in the city, they only employ 7 percent of the *alteño* workforce. Most manufacturing companies are small

[181] FUNDEMPRESA estimates that 80 per cent of these tiny companies are unipersonal (one assumes with intermittent involvement of family labour). CEDLA research suggests that the general distribution of firms by size has not changed much in the past decade (Escóbar de Pabón 2015, 90).

scale workshop operations in the popular economy. These productive units are concentrated in the production of confectionary, food, wood and furniture (see graph 6.3), sectors that 'produce little value-added or demand for skilled labour' and that have limited access to capital and low productivity (Escóbar de Pabón et al. 2015, 91).

Around 24 percent of *alteño* firms operate in the services sector. The majority of economic activity in the services sector is dedicated to 'hospitality and accommodation, as well as catering and company services (e.g., accounting, legal services, maintenance, transport, cleaning), many of which have been created as a result of outsourcing practices' (Escóbar de Pabón 2015, 91). Almost 16 percent of firms maintain and repair vehicles (a service linked to the transport sector), nearly 7 percent elaborate food or drink and 5 percent run hotels or restaurants (see graph 6.3). Transport is not included in the activities of the companies listed above as it is organised through transport unions and the city-wide Federación Andina de Transporte described above.

Of the 1500 firms sampled by CEDLA, 41 percent operate in the commercial sector (Escóbar de Pabón 2015, 92). Large companies are almost entirely absent from the tertiary sectors and small-scale producers, merchants and service providers all operate in the informalised popular economy under conditions of intense competition (Escóbar de Pabón 2015, 89). The Morales years have seen a boom in commerce in El Alto, with over half of firms in CEDLA's sample being established since 2006 (Escóbar et al. 2015, 96). Not only does this underscore the transience and uncertainty in the commercial sector, it also points to an increase in the number of firms operating in the sector.

Class Formation and the Popular Economy

The experience of firms, however small, working in commerce has varied due to their access to resources and place in the circuits of capital. It is therefore vital to unpick the processes of stratification between different economic actors within the popular economy. In recent years, El Alto has replaced La Paz as the distribution hub for wholesale [*mayorista*] merchants, who travel with their goods between the ports of Chile, southern Peru and the rest of Bolivia. Merchants trading all forms of goods have moved from the narrow congested streets of the Gran Poder (around the old wholesale centres Huyustus and Eloy Salmón) and from the fruit and vegetable market

Rodríguez, up to the marketplaces of La Ceja and Villa Dolores in El Alto, which have better access to central road networks than *paceño* marketplaces (Tassi et al. 2013, 93–94). Multi-sited ethnographic research by anthropologists has sketched the economic flows within the popular economy (see Tassi et al. 2013, 2015), revealing the importance of the city of El Alto as a regional distribution centre of many goods, including motor vehicles, electronics and garments. This dynamic is visible in graph 6.3 as the predominance of companies in bulk sales activities and the trade of vehicles.

A section of the wholesalers—who control the large-scale flow of goods and are responsible for imported foreign goods, especially from China, arriving at Bolivian markets through Chilean seaports—have accumulated a significant amount of capital. The shift of the heart of commerce to El Alto has been accompanied by an increase in commercial flows as the consumption of Bolivian society has grown. The macroeconomic dynamics linked to the commodities boom (2002–2013) and the increased capture of natural resource rents by the Bolivian state analysed in the previous chapter have increased consumption capacity in the city. This has been accompanied by a growing supply of cheap consumer goods thanks to the consolidation of trade routes with China (Tassi et al. 2013, 73).

The result of these processes of accumulation has been a growing stratification within the popular economy of El Alto, with many of those controlling import-export of consumer goods rising above the retailers [*minoristas*] or *ambulantes* (small scale merchants who either have a permanent stall or lay their wares in the street). Whilst the latter have to contend with the low quality and precarious employment outlined above, some of the former have been able to plunge their capital into new ventures. Commercial traders are in part responsible for the construction boom in parts of El Alto, La Paz and beyond, with new modern malls housing foreign and domestic retail brands popping up in established commercial centres (Müller 2017). The merchants themselves are responsible for this 'local upgrading' and have sunk their own accumulated capital into these buildings, transforming the local shopping districts of La Paz and El Alto.

The most visible sign of a new layer of commercial bourgeoisie emerging in El Alto is the new architectural form, the *cholet*. These brightly-coloured, multi-stored building, which have come to dominate the skyline of El Alto, are comprised of several floors of commercial or event space topped with an apartment where the proprietor

resides. *Cholets* are considered a new Aymara or indigenous form of architecture and a symptom of the new-found pride indigenous people have in Bolivia (Salazar 2016, 95). As such, they have captured the imagination of journalists across the world, with the neo-Andean baroque architectural style winning legions of admirers (see Banerjee 2015, Bertelli and Lill 2016, Miroff 2014, Pangsburn 2016, Thurman 2015).

Whilst most acknowledge the accumulation of wealth and the economic gains from *cholets*—which can reportedly cost up to US$6 million (Salazar 2016, 91)—the particular dynamics of class formation and stratification underpinning the emergence of this new display of wealth is often overlooked. *Cholets* are an 'indigenised' expression of newly accumulated wealth and the etching in space of the stratification of class in places including El Alto. They are intimately linked to the particular experiences of wholesale traders, who travel across the region—from the Chilean ports and beyond to the production centre of Guangzhou in China or the small, hidden garment workshops of Buenos Aires and São Paulo—constructing networks of regional trade between markets (Tassi et al. 2013).[182] Many of those interviewed by journalist Yolanda Salazar (2016, 87–90) in her recent book on *cholets* expressed the need to affirm their Aymara identity and root themselves in El Alto in the face of their transient commercial lifestyles. The multiple economic uses of *cholets*—from shops and boutiques on the lower levels through the offices of dentists, doctors and lawyers to the extravagant event spaces—allow new processes of accumulation and the consolidation of the emergent commercial bourgeoisie linked to the expansion of popular economy in recent years. Moreover, as local fiestas are vital in the construction of the community, architect Randolph Cárdenas (2010, 35) argues that the extravagant event spaces that increasingly host the fiestas of the popular economy give *cholets* particular symbolic importance. *Cholets* have become associated with *morenada*, the main dance of Gran Poder (the fiesta of the merchants of La Paz). Like the *morenada,* the *cholet* is a status symbol, a flaunting of economic power only possible for a wealthy few (Salazar 2016, 81). Thus, although presented as an 'Aymara' or 'popular' form of architecture, *cholets* are used by the commercial bourgeoisie as 'a strategy of differentiation, to symbolically demonstrate that they are

[182] The fact that the first *cholet* was built for a mobile phone importer illustrates this link nicely (Valencia 2017).

distinct' from their neighbours, and to underline 'differences in social status and economic power' (Salazar 2016, 91).

By bringing the community into the lower levels of the *cholet* and placing their residence at the top of the construction, the *alteño* bourgeoisie emphasise and consolidate the hierarchies in communities that have emerged from capital accumulation in the popular economy. Such is the luxury of *cholets* that the *paceño* elite have started to have their *quiceñeras*,[183] wedding receptions and other major events in El Alto. *Cholets* have also started hosting commercial parties attracting electronic artists from Europe and, hot on their tails, backpackers from around the world (Machicao Pacheco 2018). Whilst this does not demonstrate acceptance of this new bourgeoisie by the old *paceño* elite, it does suggest an alignment of interests and the confirmation of the importance of this class fraction at the local level of La Paz (and arguably beyond), even as this Aymara elite seeks to differentiate themselves from their whiter counterparts (Salazar 2016, 90).

It is no surprise that the SPF in El Alto was in one of these new buildings— above a dentist no less![184] — and the location of the meetings gave great pride to the attendees. However, many SPF participants had never entered a *cholet* before and this ostentatious display of wealth was still distant from their everyday realities (if not quite as distant as that of the old white/*mestizo paceño* elite). As the labour market data above suggests, most working in the popular economy do not accumulate this amount of wealth and continue to work in low paid and precarious forms of work. *Cholets* thus embody the complexity of El Alto's position during the years of the MAS government: on the one hand they are a symbol of the progress made by the city of El Alto since the Gas War and the rise in indigenous self-esteem; on the other hand, they act as a reminder of the emergent divides across and within class lines. They simultaneously point to 'capitalist progress' made in El Alto over the past decade and the accompanying processes of class formation, albeit shaped by the historical, cultural and political specificities of the city of El Alto.

In sum, the majority of the working-classes in El Alto continue to be employed in precarious work by informalised small, micro or family firms, with the commercial

[183] *Quiceñeras* are a vital celebration across Latin America (and in the *latino* community in the US) that mark the transition from childhood to adulthood for women on their sixteenth birthday.
[184] Miriam Shakow (2014, 25) stresses that social practices, including a trip to the orthodontist, are important symbolic markers of class. They are key components of the changing experience of class in El Alto.

and services sector absorbing most of the labour supply. The few large- and medium-size firms that operate in the city are concentrated in industrial manufacturing, and most firms remain small, employing fewer than five people, with limited access to technology or capital. Nevertheless, there has been an intensified process of class formation and capital accumulation linked to wholesale merchants, who control (and extract surplus from) the supply networks of the popular economy that have been consolidated and expanded during the commodities boom. It is within this class structure that the SPF was conceived and founded.

El Alto School of Political Formation

The SPF in El Alto between July 2016 and January 2017 was an initiative organised by the MAS to engage with the party's rank-and-file supporters and affiliated social organisations in El Alto (Cambio 2017).

Figure 6.3: Author and Participants of the School of Political Formation, El Alto, September 2016

Source: Author's photo

In the wake of the February 2016 referendum defeat (21F) over the re-election of Morales for a fourth presidential term (see McNelly 2016b), the MAS ostensibly set up the SPF to guarantee the formation of new leaders in El Alto, drawn from the MAS militants and MAS-FEJUVE presidents of El Alto's 14 city districts. It set out a strategy to disseminate information and the political message of the MAS amongst government supporters through a series of workshops led by MAS politicians, academics and journalists, complemented by a public communication strategy through social media and the press.[185]

The opening comments of the SPF revealed its overarching aims more clearly than the official government press releases:

> During recent times, comrades [*compañeros*], what has happened is that we have been converted more into benefactors of the *proceso de cambio* than into protagonists. We are waiting to see what is going to benefit us, to see which public works Evo is going to do for us. And we are still waiting/hoping [*esperando*], when this revolution will happen only when we mobilised ourselves to transform the country… The state is performing its function, but other than that, the other fundamental wheels that need to turn are the social organisations who have stopped participating.[186]

Rather than being set up to bring through a new generation of leaders that could themselves replace Morales (as per some of its publicity), these preliminary comments suggest that the SPF was organised to develop a local leadership to support the continuing of a MAS government led by Evo Morales. The introductory remarks, which were given by one of the local organisers of the SPF, underline how the MAS government has explicitly used transformism to fortify both the legitimacy of the state and their political standing.[187] The SPF seeks to draw social organisations of El Alto's civil society—most notably the FEJUVE-El Alto—into the political society within which the MAS central government operates.

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[185] Many MAS supporters thought that the referendum was only lost because of lies spread through social media. On the eve of the referendum, allegations of the president Morales having an illegitimate child with a woman accused of corruption, Gabriela Zapata, surfaced (McNelly 2016a). For *MASistas*, these accusations were pure fiction invented by the opposition to win the referendum. Whilst both sides have undoubtedly been untruthful, the veracity of these facts is unimportant for my line of argumentation. What matters here is that this galvanised the MAS to try and change its media and communication strategy.

[186] Introductory remarks, SPF, El Alto, 07/06/2016.

[187] For a theoretical justification, see García Linera 2011.

In the aims of the SPF, social organisations are expected to set in motion the political project of the MAS *on the ground* in El Alto. To this end, organisers invited prominent leaders from the MAS aligned social organisations to participate, as well as local MAS activists. Members of the FEJUVE-El Alto leadership were warmly welcomed by SPF attendees, with their presence and role within the organisation announced at the start of the meetings and greeted with loud applause from other participants. Members of the COR-El Alto and other commercial guilds were also present and equally welcomed, as were *transportistas* and members of the parent's groups, the *juntas escolares*. Special seats were reserved for these distinguished guests, placed to the right of the speaker in plain sight of the rest of the audience.[188] The remainder of the audience was a mixture of male and female rank-and-file party activists, many of whom who were also part of their local MAS-aligned neighbourhood associations, and nearly all of whom who would self-identify as indigenous. The different backgrounds of attendees reflected those of El Alto in general, with usage of *hermano* [brother] and *compañero* [comrade] underscoring people's *campesino* roots or mining heritage respectively.[189]

The SPF is one of the places where the MAS has attempted most explicitly to disseminate their ideas and align the interests of the rank-and-file working-classes with the broader political project of the MAS. A brief examination of the presentations and workshop themes addressed throughout the six months of the SPF demonstrate how the government expected to achieve this goal. Presenters included many notable figures from within the MAS government of the period, including Chancellor, David Coquehuanca; Minister of Government, Carlos Romero; Minister of the Productive Economy, Verónica Morales; Minister of Justice, Virginia Velasco Condori; former Minister of the Productive Economy, Antonia Rodríguez; La Paz City Councillor, Jorge Silva; and Vice Minister of Decolonisation, Félix Cárdenas. The sessions themselves had a wide range of themes. Some were presented by government ministers and

[188] As I was nearly always the only foreign guest, I was often ushered into these prime seats. As a foreign observer (and white or *q'ara* at that), however, I was not permitted to speak or ask questions to the presenters. This was a right reserved for the MAS militants, many of whom had never been to a public lecture of this nature before.

[189] *Hermano* is an address associated with the peasant unions and indigenous social movements, whereas *compañero* is a legacy of the different Marxist and socialist traditions, particularly of the miners, and their influence on the labour movement. The majority of migrants to El Alto in the 1980s were either peasants forced off their land by the 1982–1983 El Niño-La Niña weather event coupled with the commodification of agriculture or relocated miners after the start of neoliberalism in 1985 (see chapters 2 and 3).

addressed the policy areas and strategies of their particular ministry and vice-ministry and how they fitted into the wider political project of the MAS. Then there were sessions given by historians and sociologists that examined the histories of colonialism in Bolivia, the Republican State (1825–2009), military *coup d'états* and neoliberalism. Whilst most of the sessions traced the historical dynamics behind these processes, others were explicitly directed at the political opponents of the MAS.[190] Combined, the sessions attempted to place the MAS within the historical dynamics of the country and explore some of the key tenets to their political project—such as the *proceso de cambio*, decolonisation, communitarian socialism, Agenda Patriótica 2025 (Patriotic Agenda 2025) and the plural economy.[191] Whilst this fits with the readings of the Pink Tide through the transformism stage of Gramsci's passive revolution (e.g., Hesketh and Morton 2014, Modonesi 2012, Tapia 2011, Webber 2016), the experience of the SPF for the *alteño* attendees is a reminder of the complexities and contradictions contained in these multi-layered processes.

Experiencing Transformism

Using transformism as a frame to understand recent Bolivian history is powerful as it maps out how and why the MAS government has pacified, demobilised and divided some social organisations. However, some readings of these processes downplay the tensions and struggles present in these processes and do not allow for incongruence or contradiction within the position of individuals affected by these dynamics. For example, the otherwise lucid work of Luis Tapia (2011, 114–25) paints a somewhat mechanistic reading of the integration of social movements into the state through the partisan nature of the Constituent Assembly, and the absorption of social movement leaders in the party structures of the MAS. In their spatio-temporal reading of class struggle and state formation through passive revolution in Bolivia, Chris Hesketh and David Morton (2014, 163–64) only see mobilisations for or against the MAS government. Jeffery Webber (2016, 1861), in his reading of passive revolution through Italian-Mexican Gramscian scholar Massimo Modonesi, leaves unanswered the

[190] The most notable of these sessions was one that focused on the corruption of Samuel Dorria Media, leader of the opposition party UN, during his time as Minister of Planning in the MIR government (1991–1993).
[191] Agenda 2025 is the development plan which replaced the 2006 NDP in 2013 (see Bolivia 2013).

questions of *how*, *why* and *to what extent* transformism 'guarantee[s] passivity to the new order and encourag[es] demobilisation, or at least control[s] what mobilisation of the popular classes occurs'. In these readings of passive revolution the messiness of everyday life is ignored (or at the very least downplayed) and questions of where the limits of support and opposition lie, and under what circumstances they are reached, are neglected.

This is significant and is a problem not with the concept per se but with particular readings of transformism. After all, as the prominent translator of Gramsci to the Latin American context Modonesi (2012, 142) argues, passive revolution should be understood not as 'a subversive movement of subaltern classes but as a combination of objective transformations that mark a significant discontinuity and a strategy of change orientated to guarantee the stability of the fundamental relations of domination'. In the readings above the particular political subjectivities of actors are downplayed or forgotten. The task of this section is thus to move Modonesi's reading of passive revolution down from a high level of abstraction to a concrete analysis of political subjectivities and the quotidian practices and contradictions that political actors face in El Alto.

The SPF offers a lens with which to further unearth the experiences of Evo Morales' government, particularly through the conversations I had with the attendees and the questions that participants asked the presenters. Despite the SPF being an exceptional opportunity for most attendees, their questions were especially revealing of the tensions, incongruence and contradictions present in rank-and-file political support for the MAS. They demonstrated how the MAS government has been *experienced* by people in El Alto and the quotidian aspects of the *proceso de cambio*, including the rank-and-file reception of the ideological tensions within the MAS and their assessment of the implementation of the promises of Morales' government.

The Ideological Tensions at the Heart of the MAS

As discussed in the previous chapter, underpinning the MAS is an unstable and contradictory set of ideological bases, united under the figurehead of Evo Morales. Morales has been successful, anthropologist Nancy Postero (2017, 35) argues, at using 'indigenous history and bodies in political performance, borrowing heavily from indigenous social movement tactics and strategies' to build strong support from the

bases of the MAS. The city of El Alto is one of the MAS strongholds—it was the only large metropolitan area where the 'Yes' vote won in the 2016 referendum (INE 2016)[192]—and a place where the indigeneity of the MAS (embodied in the president himself) has been an important factor in maintaining support, as constant references to *hermano* Evo (indigenous brother Evo Morales) by SPF participants continually demonstrated. In the main presentation in the very first session of the SPF, Vice Minister for Decolonisation Félix Cardenas stated:

> thirty years ago it would have been impossible to think of an indigenous *mujer de pollera* walking in the country's major plazas and now they stride the corridors of power.[193]

And stride they do, with two of the government ministers that attended the SPF (Antonia Rodríguez and Virginia Velasco Condori) being impressive indigenous/*chola mujeres de pollera.* The increased status and visibility of indigenous people made the room visibly swell with pride, as many attendees were themselves '*de pollera'*. In accordance with Postero's claim, the indigeneity of Morales, and therefore the MAS government more generally, was a visible reason why many SPF participants supported the government. In a fiery intervention, one *alteño* underscored the racist nature of Bolivian state and how, even with the return to democracy in 1982, the domination of indigenous people by those of Spanish descent continued, this cycle only being broken, with the election of Morales:

> I think it is important to reflect on the theme, sometimes we want to use *coup d'état* [to explain the form of government], but it was the same with the civil governments. During the democratic government of [Hugo] Banzer, democratic government of Goni [Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada], who were the dead? Our people! Perhaps they were middle-class? Of course not, not one! *Q'aras* are *q'aras*. Behind the *coup* there were always an interested group supporting the actions, and they were the middle classes, who are at the moment in government… Before 2006 we were ruled by *q'aras*, military or civil government, all of them *q'aras*. They alone ruled. Why was there the alliance between Banzer and Jaime Paz

[192] This is despite the election of oppositional candidate Solidad Chapetón, of UN, to power in the 2015 municipal elections. Local elections in El Alto have often been used to voice discontent with the central government and Chapetón's election was linked to local events and particularly the corruption of former MAS mayor Edgar Patana.
[193] Félix Cardenas presenting at the SPF, El Alto, 07/06/2016.

> Zamorra [in 1988]? Because it was *q'ara* to *q'ara*.[194] Blood calls blood. The *coup d'états*, the *coup* of Banzer in September 1971, was supported by the MNR and the FSB. The coup of Natusch Busch in 1979, was again supported by the MNR. These were not coincidences. This is something internal [to the Bolivian political system], as *hermano* Evo says. Evo came to power, why did the attempted coup of 2008 fail? Because now *we* are in power, with so-called class-consciousness, consciousness of race, of blood. Because now the Aymara and Quechua we are more than 65 percent of the population and no one is going to arrive at power through a *coup*, because we know that we are going to govern eternally.[195]

These comments reveal the importance of Morales as an indigenous president and as a rupture with the rest of Bolivia's recent history. The attendee draws attention to the sources of support for military *coup d'états* from the middle-classes and their political parties, in particular the support of the right-wing of the party of the 1952 revolution, MNR, and the Bolivian falangist party, FSB, for Hugo Banzer's *coup* in 1971.[196] He underscores the class alliances between the military and civilian political parties that excluded Bolivia's mainly indigenous working-classes and peasants, and the non-correspondence between changing forms of government and the intransigence of racial exclusion and oppression throughout the republican period.

The attendee also underlines the fact that the majority of the victims (of military coups and of moments of violent upsurges such as October 2003) were indigenous, repeatedly using the Aymara term for non-indigenous—*q'ara*—to emphasis the racial character of the Bolivian state. The participation's recurrent references to pseudo-biological conceptions of race—such as 'blood calls blood'—reveal the effects of the weight of a long history of racial subordination and exclusion on El Alto. Instead of breaking with the eugenic categories employed by colonialism and later the republican state, decolonisation for this participant simply means inverting this blood-based order. Such comments underscore the continued belief (albeit in a less refined form) in a certain strain of Aymara nationalism that brought Morales' political rival, Felipe Quispe, to fame in the late-1990s as the leader of the CSUTCB. They also demonstrate both

[194] This is also a pun on 'face to face', which is '*cara a cara*' in Spanish.
[195] Participant question, SPF, El Alto, 28/06/2016.
[196] See chapter 2 for a more detailed historical context of the period of military dictatorships.

the difficulty of a decolonising agenda in practical terms, and limited success that people in El Alto have had in breaking with colonial ideas and social orders.

The quotation also strongly highlights how effective the MAS government has been at mobilising notions of race to garner support from militants in El Alto through indigenous rituals performed by Morales (his profane side outlined in the previous chapter). As the participant proclaimed: 'Evo came to power…now we are in power'. Nonetheless, despite the affective response of the attendees to indigeneity, this did not quell their concerns, criticisms or demands of the MAS. Indeed, the comment about the middle-classes now being in government contained in the quotation above is a criticism of the way that the MAS have governed. The attendees of the SPF were all militant supporters of the government, but they were quick to criticise and question the government and its representatives and highlight what they viewed as shortcomings of the MAS.

This is where the questions of the SPF challenge some of the readings of state-social movement relations through transformism. Transformism, following Gramsci (2011b, 151, 257, Q8, §80), occurs in two phases: firstly, a molecular transformation occurs as individual civil society leaders are assimilated by the state (e.g., the FEJUVE-El Alto leaders who are also affiliated with the MAS); secondly, these individuals disseminate the ideology of the ruling classes to subvert and pacify the subaltern classes (through channels like the SPF). However, the questions asked by attendees demonstrate hostility or confusion—as opposed to passive acceptance—of the MAS ideology presented. One of the clearest examples of what I mean by this was contained in the intervention of one participant a month into the sessions. During the first class, Vice Minister of Decolonisation Félix Cardenas addressed decolonisation and the 'third-way' of the MAS, explaining to the packed room that the division of 'Left' and 'Right' came from the French Revolution, and that in order to decolonise the state the MAS was moving beyond such categorisation. The MAS was neither socialist (Left) or liberal (Right) in the eyes of Cardenas. However, a couple of weeks later the SPF was treated to a presentation extolling the route to Communitarian Socialism being trodden by the government, highlighting the influence on the government by the works of, amongst others, Karl Marx. Following the presentation by Raúl García Linera, the brother of vice-president Álvaro García Linera, the *atleño* participants demonstrated their unease with the obvious tension between the position of Cardenas and that of Raúl:

> I have come to various of these meetings already, and I have listened to various people [including Vice-Minister of Decolonisation Félix Cardenas] and they have told us that, in contrast to what you have just told us, rather than destructive capitalism or socialism, we are living in a sort of third system which is neither capitalism nor socialism. I want you to talk a little bit about that because it is confusing having two contrasting perspectives on the *proceso de cambio* [coming from the government].[197]

This intervention reveals that although Morales' sublime and profane character explored in the previous chapter has successfully garnered political support over the past decade, government supporters have not accepted the government's ideology outright. How can they when they are not even sure what that ideology is? The ideological tensions at the heart of the MAS are clear for all to see, and the confusion voiced by SPF participants challenges the passive assimilation of subaltern classes suggested by some accounts of the MAS using transformism. It reveals the limits to the acceptance of MAS ideology and a critical interrogation (however small) of the logic behind what attendees are told by MAS representatives.

Experiences of Being Co-opted: Sell Outs, Political Consciousness and the Invitados

How processes of transformism have been understood by those inside organisations that have been co-opted by the government adds another dimension to the analysis. In fact, one of the preoccupations of the MAS militants throughout the SPF was the growing top-down nature of the *proceso de cambio*:

> It appears in the last couple of years there has been a reduction in the popular initiatives from the bases which has been replaced by an initiative from above, passed down through political lines. The *proceso* has been increasingly done from above. At first, there was wide recognition [of the importance of social movements] and accumulation [of political consciousness] which has now been left behind. Now, when it comes to the question of how to tackle [the referendum result] 21F, it should be a popular initiative from below. It should be from the bases [*de base*]. How do we re-initiate in the

[197] Participant question, SPF, El Alto, 12/07/2016.

> bases, in the common [*lo común*], in the citizen herself? How do we confront the everyday of the *proceso de cambio*?[198]

These comments evince some awareness of and discomfort at processes of co-optation that MAS-supporting members of social organisations have been subject to. For MAS supporters in El Alto, social movements are—or should be—still considered important political actors capable of more than simply supporting the government, a position that faintly reflects the political radicalism that pushed to transform Bolivian society during the social struggle (2000–2005).

Moreover, mirroring the perspective of Jorge Viaña highlighted in chapter 4, for many of the attendees the reduced participation of social organisation in the MAS government has been a two-sided dynamic: political consciousness and formation accumulated through social struggle has been slowly but surely lost, whilst power has been consolidated within the state (and in particular within the executive). On the one hand, participants of the SPF bemoan the lack of political formation of many MAS activists and regret the loss of the political consciousness accumulated during the social struggles 2000–2005, i.e., the tendency to be co-opted. Many of the local leaders who have been integrated into the government have been unable to implement the demands of their social movement bases, and some have been accused of and jailed for corruption. As one SPF participant stated:

> Building on what the other *compañeros* have said about us not working well together to win the *alcaldía* [in the 2015 sub-elections]… there was no social consciousness. Firstly, to be able to work to advance the *proceso de cambio* is linked to social consciousness and the ability to work 100 percent together, united, not in separate groups who gather and go work in different areas. We have been working since 2006 and we are still not working well together now… Consciousness is the key, each one of us need to be conscious of what we are trying to do and work together because division and discord causes the problem we had in the *alcaldía*, where everyone who was bought [*se han vendido*] went to work there, leaving a few of us behind to work. It should not be that way.[199]

[198] Participant question, SPF, El Alto, 30/06/2016.
[199] Participant question, SPF, El Alto, 28/06/2016.

The participant's remarks not only draw attention to the perceived need of individuals to diligently uphold and maintain their political consciousness (however this might be done), but they also form a critique of those who have entered power and, in the words of the participant, been 'bought', causing them to subsequently forget about the constituency they supposedly represent. The comments form a commentary on recent political processes in El Alto and problems with the corruption of local MAS-affiliated leaders. The former FEJUVE-El Alto leader Abel Mamani, a key figure in the 2004 El Alto Water War, is a good example of the shortcomings of local *alteño* leaders when in power. Despite lacking technical experience and not having any administrative experience, Mamani was appointed minister of public works in 2006 (Laurie and Crespo 2007, 841). He was responsible for the creation of a new state water company, La Empresa Pública Social de Agua y Saneamiento (The Public Social Water and Sanitation Company, EPSAS), which proved unable to ameliorate the condition of water utilities in El Alto, actually making service provision worse in some cases (Farthing and Kohl 2014, 36). He placed the sectoral interests of the FEJUVE-El Alto first and offered 'government jobs for some of its affiliates' (Anria 2015, 88). He was forced out of office after a scandal in 2008 and left a legacy of a failing water company that was eventually closed in 2013 (Tapia 2013). The nature of Mamani's dismissal in disgrace encapsulates the perspective held by many SPF participants: political consciousness is needed if local leaders are to keep the interests of the general political project of the MAS above their own personal interests.

Perhaps the case which is symptomatic of the shortcomings of the MAS in El Alto is that of former MAS mayor of El Alto, Edgar Patana. Like Abel Mamani, Patana also climbed to public office through one of the social organisations of El Alto, in this case the COR-El Alto (Anria 2015, 89). He was mayor of El Alto between 2010 and 2015 before losing in the 2015 municipal elections to Soledad Chapetón, and he has subsequently been jailed for corruption in 2016 (Erbol 2017).[200] It was widely known that Patana followed the sectoral interests of the COR-El Alto and operated his administration in an unorthodox manner.[201] He was known for offering COR-affiliates jobs in local offices, earning the MAS the title of *busca-pegas* (*pega* searchers) in the

[200] See Mancilla (2016) for an account of corruption in state-social organisation relations in El Alto.
[201] Arturo Quispe, 02/06/2016; José Antonio Moreno Villegas, FEJUVE-La Paz, interview, La Paz, 30/05/2016.

city of El Alto,[202] and oversaw the propagation of payments by local firms to win municipal contracts for public works projects. He had a close relationship with the MAS aligned social organisations of El Alto, all of which backed his re-election campaign in 2015 (Mancilla 2016, 135). Unsurprisingly, the MAS activists were frustrated by the label *busca-pega* and stressed the need to break with this configuration of state-social organisation relations, as the introductory remarks of the SPF reveal:

> We have to not fall into the trap of governing in the neoliberal style like some other left-wing political parties who say "They have robbed us, why am I not going to steal too?" Some *compañeros* who did not have the opportunity to lead before now find themselves as authorities and sometimes they forget the critical mentality and proposals… they follow their own personal gains.[203]

The following of personal gains was seen as due to a lack of political consciousness and was framed as a symptom of the demobilisation of social organisations in El Alto. For many SPF participants, leaders had lost sight of the broader goals of the *proceso de cambio* and their bases were not able to keep them in check. Leadership roles had become one of the best ways into public office, and rank-and-file activists viewed leadership positions as a means to personal improvement rather than positions of responsibility inside a broader political project of social transformation (Anria 2015, 88). These instances have been particular painful for *alteños* from social organisations because both Mamani and Patana had climbed through local social organisations, proving themselves to be dedicated and upstanding members of the *alteño* community through the social struggles. Many *alteños* held both in high regard, making their fall from grace even harder to take. However, rather than looking for structural reasons for why local leadership might fail to deliver the demands of their bases or make fatal political errors once incorporated into the state, SPF participants shift the responsibility onto an individual loss of consciousness (albeit tied into the absence of a social base able to keep these individuals in check).

On the other hand, the *alteños* who had played such an important role in bringing the MAS to power complained about the power of the central government over them to its very representatives. Despite recognising the shortcomings of local

[202] A *pega* is a position in the government that is exchanged for organisational loyalty (Anria 2015, 86).
[203] Introductory remarks, SPF, El Alto, 07/06/2016.

alteño leaders in positions of power, SPF participants simultaneously rue the lack of opportunities for, and influence of, MAS activists in the city:

> Despite what we are doing at the level of the bases, they [government ministers] are damaging the *proceso de cambio*, they are not listening to us. Because of this, I think we have to generate a current that makes them listen to us, the rank-and-file.[204]

In order words, SPF participants explicitly manifested a desire *not* to turn away from either trying to get local activists into positions of political power or influencing state power more indirectly. The first SPF meeting happened in the wake of the referendum defeat and the closure of the state-run textiles firm ENATEX.[205] In the face of these political developments there was widespread agreement that the MAS had made some political errors, and that the increasing centralisation of decision-making in parts of the government away from MAS militants was causing the government to err. Part of the problem, argue some *MASistas*, is that without a proper political opponent, all of the old political caste have become members of the MAS political party:

> There are a number of themes to reflect upon *compañeros*. One is that the MAS has become hegemonic in the sense that there is nothing opposing it. The tiny group of elites that ran the country before do not have any proposals for the country. Their proposal is neoliberalism. And what did neoliberalism deliver? Nothing! That is their proposal. But when a force becomes hegemonic, everybody jumps aboard. Everyone comes aboard [*todos se suben al coche*] and the *ex-ADNistas* become *MASistas,* founders of the party and ministers to boot.[206]

These political chameleons are the *invitados* discussed in the previous chapter: 'our ministers are all middle-class, *ex-ADNistas*, *MNRistas*, *MIRistas*' one participant exclaimed.[207] Another said:

> the children of the *ADNistas, MNRistas, MIRistas* are in the government… we have to govern, we have come to power to

[204] Participant Question, SPF, El Alto, 07/06/2016.
[205] In May 2016 the state textiles factory run by EXATEX was closed, reducing the size of the workforce by 900 people (Cuiza, 2016). Many inside the labour movement contend that the move mirrors the dismissals under neoliberal governments (Erbol, 2016) and the COB mounted three general strikes of 24-, 48- and 72-hours, but to little avail.
[206] Introductory remarks, SPF, El Alto, 07/06/2016.
[207] Participant question, SPF, El Alto, 28/06/2016.

> exercise power and not to give power to *MNRistas, ADNistas, MIRistas*.[208]

As explained in the last chapter, the *invitados* are a vital part of Morales' sublimity, and shifting political errors and unpopular decisions onto his surrounding ministers has enabled Morales to maintain high personal political support even through difficult periods for at least a decade.[209] However, what the questions of the *alteño* participants of the SPF reveal is that, similarly to the indigeneity of Morales discussed above, Morales' sublimity has not obscured all of the contradictions of his government and has not prevented vociferous criticism from some sections of government supporters. The profane-sublime dialectic adds a dimension to explanations of why people support the president and the mechanisms used by the MAS government to exploit and expand this support. However, these mechanisms are not entirely effective and only propagate support for Morales up to a point, a limit that has been further reduced thanks to a slowly deteriorating political situation with the loss of the 2016 referendum and political economic context of the end of the commodities boom.

In sum, processes of transformism in El Alto remain incomplete, and the molecular co-optation of individual leaders has not enabled the passive absorption of MAS ideology. Indeed, the experiences in El Alto serve as a reminder that methods of statecraft are only ever partially completed and therefore they are in constant need of renewal. This being said, it is also clear that transformism has been relatively successful at demobilising social organisations in El Alto and reorienting the horizons of possibility away from political action from below to state action. This is best encapsulated by the pleading of one SPF participant. Having sat through an hour-long presentation on the long histories of military intervention in Bolivian politics (see chapter 2), a woman in the front row raises her hand and claims the microphone. She gets to her feet and looks directly into the eyes of the history professor who has just given the lecture:

> I want to say, as a victim of the Gas War, unfortunately I do not have a job or gas. So I want to ask, how is it that we have arrived here? I want to ask our president and those that fill the ministries

[208] Participant question, SPF, El Alto, 28/06/2016.
[209] Satisfaction with Morales remained above 50 percent until the re-election referendum in February 2016. Since then his popularity has dipped, but this still does not nullify his sustained popular support from 2006 to 2016, even through the TIPNIS crisis and the *gasolinazo* outlined in the previous chapter.

> how come there are no jobs down there in the bowl of La Paz and up here in the city of El Alto, there are people, people who live in poverty and cannot find adequate work.[210]

There are a number of facets to this quotation. Firstly, the questioner positions herself (and by extension El Alto) as a victim in order to make demands of the central government. In the process, it could be argued that she gives too much agency to Morales and his ministers, making them the *only* political actors capable of finding solutions to the city's problems. However, the second facet of this quotation also suggests a spectre of political organisation away from the state. The use of the collective 'we' hints at the role that El Alto had (and possibly continues to have) in shaping the political agenda through informal contestation, and the juxtaposition of Evo, his ministers and public officials and the poor of El Alto is a reminder of the unfulfilled promise of the MAS government. As such, the *alteña* women captures the partiality of transformism in El Alto, emphasising the importance of Morales and his government and simultaneously of the social organisations of El Alto and their potential to change the political landscape once again.

Spatial Differentiation in the *Proceso de Cambio*

The rank-and-file MAS militants in El Alto have grown increasingly frustrated at their marginal position in national politics and the limited resources of the municipal government. There are two intertwined dimensions to these complaints. (1) the only partial completion of the demands of *alteño* social movements during the two Gas Wars; and (2) the spatial discrepancies at local and national levels. These geographical differences are both on a local-scale, thanks to the unevenness of urban development in El Alto, and on a national scale, between El Alto and other cities such as Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. In short, El Alto has not transformed in the way that *alteños* expected. Symptomatic of their dissatisfaction with the MAS government are arguments around El Alto as a forgotten city. This narrative is common amongst FEJUVE-El Alto leaders both past and present, who situate the FEJUVE-El Alto at the heart of social struggles of the Gas Wars. They argue El Alto fought and died for the country, and for struggles that have subsequently been disregarded by the government:

[210] Participant question, SPF, El Alto, 28/06/2016.

> Evo Morales has forgotten the Gas War and the militants of El Alto. El Alto gave the country political and economic direction, but we are forgotten. We need the title of "militants of the Gas War" so that the president and this process have to take note of El Alto. We need this title so we can go to the fiscal pact and demand more resources and economic activity in the city of El Alto.[211]

The events of October 2003 have cemented an imaginary of El Alto as a 'rebel city' (Lazar 2008), a city of militants who were the reason that Morales came to power. This perspective traverses support for political parties and is a widely held opinion in neighbourhood associations and by FEJUVE-El Alto leaders of all political stripes, as the comments of the resident of the rebellious FEJUVE-El Alto, Benigno Siñani, demonstrate:

> There is another governmental lineage. Thanks to El Alto, Evo is where he is, but we have not ever received any thanks. This is what we are trying to put into the *alteño* public consciousness: "we have supported the government but what have we received in return?"[212]

Despite their opposition to the MAS government and Morales, the rebellious FEJUVE-El Alto still frame themselves as having a legitimate channel to make claims of the central government because of their actions in 2003, a perspective I argue is captured by Silva's 'informal contestatory' popular interest intermediation regime. Their gripe is that, until now, their claims have remained unfulfilled. Siñani continues:

> What have we received until now? And what has the opposition received? Who are the opposition in my opinion? Where does Santa Cruz come from? What has Cochabamba received? And if El Alto has given Evo his presidential seat, what have we received? Nothing! But those who have been the opposition and given Morales a hard time [*un palo duro*] have received economic resources and large-scale projects. In other words, what we have to understand and make the *alteño* rank-and-file analyse is that El Alto has well and truly been forgotten.[213]

[211] Participant question, SPF, El Alto, 29/09/2016.
[212] Benigno Siñani, executive secretary of the Rebellious FEJUVE-El Alto, interview, El Alto, 19/10/2016.
[213] Benigno Siñani, 19/10/2016.

Siñani's perspective exhibits the complexity of how the dynamics of the MAS government have played out at the level of El Alto, and, by extension, how they have unfurled unevenly over the national space of the Bolivian state. The productive investments in hydrocarbons and mineral mining outlined in the previous chapter have been concentrated in mega projects situated in the departments of Tarija, Santa Cruz and Cochabamba, in rural areas far from all metropolitan areas and the other side of the country from El Alto. The infrastructure projects have been likewise in distant areas, including the TIPNIS highway between the departments of Cochabamba and Beni, a highway linking Santa Cruz and Cochabamba and new railway infrastructure on the Eastern Network in the departments of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. The exceptions to this pattern are the new cable car system linking La Paz and El Alto and the major improvement of the Pan American highway.

The consequence of this spatial distance from El Alto coupled with reports of new potentially surplus-producing projects in other departments is a bitter sentiment that the government has forgotten the city of El Alto. Indeed, through the eyes of the SPF participants and the rebellious FEJUVE-El Alto alike, government financing of these projects is not linked to the development of the nation (as per government propaganda) but to the actions of the opposition who have bullied Morales into handing over state resources, accompanied by the advice or assistance of the *invitados*.

This framing of El Alto as a forgotten city is usually accompanied by a claim for resources, with the sacrifice of *alteños* during the violence of 2003 as the perceived source of legitimacy. As such, it reflects how the ways rank-and-file MAS activists in El Alto interact with the state have been shaped by the historical role, function and structure of the FEJUVE-El Alto, and how the affective power of the state is also shaped by other factors within civil society. The FEJUVE-El Alto emerged as a mediator between a newly urbanised population and the state, filling the gaps in the absence of the state and mirroring the actions and rituals of the state. Neighbourhood associations have been in charge of distributing land and presenting proposals for basic services (such as electricity, water, roads transport, schools) in emergent urbanisations, organising citizens to carry out works when and where the state cannot. The FEJUVE-El Alto, the city-wide matrix organisation, then works with the mayor's office to try and procure funds and resources for projects. Apart from moments of state crisis (see chapter 4), the FEJUVE-El Alto is thus orientated towards the state as a

claimant demanding resources, a position that shapes the framing of El Alto as a forgotten city.

This image of El Alto as marginalised is further cemented by the fact that, despite the major improvements to the centre of the city (particularly La Ceja, 16 de Julio and Villa Dolares), much of El Alto still lacks basic services, such as street lighting, electricity, running water, paved streets and public services such as schools. The enormous rate of urban growth over the past four decades in El Alto means that it is a city that is constantly lacking all of the economic resources it needs to function properly. As former leader in the FEJUVE-La Paz José Antonio Moreno Villegas explains:

> El Alto is a small metropolis with a growing population and without the economic capacity to sustain itself. It increasingly needs drinking water, electricity and street lighting in the insecure neighbourhoods. The municipal funding and the administration has remained small and governs hardly half of the *alteño* population, maybe less, and does not think of, let alone to speak to the rest.[214]

This lack of basic services has a spatial dimension as urbanisation is continuously transforming natural space into part of the ever expanding abstract space of the city, albeit without the financial support of the state. Antonio continues:

> Who absorbs the tiny municipal budget? Necessarily its those who live more centrally so nothing arrives to the peripheries, there is no money for them.[215]

The peripheral districts of El Alto—districts 7, 8, 12 and 14 in particular—are where new migrants who come to El Alto settle. Newcomers settle on unoccupied land either purchased legally from the municipal government or illegally through land speculators called *loteadores* (Albó 2006, 333). As outlined above, migrants self-construct their houses before the state can provide services like running water, electricity or paved roads. Leaders from both the MAS FEJUVE-El Alto and non-MAS FEJUVE, as well as UN officials from the El Alto municipal government, all stressed the difficulties of providing basic services in the newest peripheral neighbourhoods of El Alto.[216] This perpetual lack of state-provided public services driven mainly by the constant growth

[214] José Antonio Moreno Villegas, FEJUVE-La Paz, interview, La Paz, 30/05/2016.
[215] José Antonio Moreno Villegas, 30/05/2016.
[216] Carlos Barrera, 10/05/2016; Hermógenes Chambi, 18/04/2016; Gumercindo Flores, municipal official, Municipal Government of El Alto, interview, El Alto, 04/05/2016.

of El Alto and its population means that the urban space of El Alto remains comparable to the neoliberal space formed during the 1980s and 1990s. Combined with the breakdown of government spending (which reveals that over 70 percent of the state's resources go to projects in the department of Santa Cruz), this image of an underdeveloped El Alto sparks resentment towards the Garden City, Cochabamba, and the receiver of government funds, Santa Cruz:

> Over the past ten years this country has got better, but it is still insufficient. Why is Cochabamba and Santa Cruz always given higher priority than El Alto? In El Alto we have serious problems but Cochabamba has more projects.[217]

The importance of this perspective is not that El Alto is underfunded compared to the cities of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz, each of which have serious problems as urban spaces too,[218] but that this comparison further foments the image of El Alto as downtrodden and forgotten.

The questions asked by SPF participants thus demonstrate important features of state-social organisation relations in El Alto. Questions of El Alto as a forgotten city tie the Gas War to legitimate claims for resources and the unevenness of the experiences of the political project of the MAS. Whilst it is difficult to assert whether the framing of El Alto as a 'rebel city' was created by the FEJUVE-El Alto, different political groups working within the organisational structure and history of the FEJUVE-El Alto have used this frame as one of the principal manners to engage with the state and understand state politics in El Alto. Given the prevalence of the FEJUVE-El Alto in SPF meetings and the local involvement of many participants in neighbourhood associations, it is unsurprising that this frame also influenced the manner in which many attendees questioned government ministers and made direct demands of the MAS.

What the questions of local SFP attendees reveal is part of the story of transformism, allowing the MAS government to maintain political legitimacy and stave off mass protest, despite employment structures largely being left unaltered and the quality of employment opportunities in the city remaining poor. They document some of the impacts of social movement demobilisation and how rank-and-file working-class

[217] Participant question, SPF, El Alto, 06/10/2016.
[218] See Goldstein (2004) and Shakow (2014) for ethnographies of the metropolitan area of Cochabamba that reveal some of the city's problems. The issues with Santa Cruz are explored in the next chapter.

actors understand these processes—actors who demonstrate with greater or lesser perception, disquiet and at times hostility, to how things have unfolded over the previous decade and to decisions make by the government. Thus, while SPF participants speak of ambivalent social movement bases, the loss of political consciousness and corruption, this is not a sign of despair and defeat. Rather, I would argue, it demonstrates the incomplete nature of co-optation and disorganisation, of continued attempts to reinvigorate working-class organisations in El Alto, and a sign that transformism is never entirely successful at pacifying working-class power from below.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to sketch out some of the experiences of the MAS government in El Alto, focusing particularly on the perspectives of rank-and-file MAS party activists and drawing on interviews of local leaders of social organisations. I began my argument by sketching out the demographics and economic structure of the city, and placing the social organisations studied in context. Importantly, I traced processes of class formation in the popular economy and examined the emergence of a new commercial bourgeoisie. I then sought to advance two interlinked arguments through examining the questions of SPF participants. Firstly, I examined the response of attendees to MAS policies and their underpinning ideologies. I argued that the questioning, criticisms and at times confusion, demonstrated an uneven and incomplete pacification of the MAS rank-and-file. However, the success of the MAS at demobilising social organisations and co-opting of local leadership was visible, as participants struggled to conceive creative political action beyond Morales and his government (thus by extension the state).

Secondly, I sought to demonstrate the effects of the unevenness of the political project on the MAS—and particularly the spatial inequality of the infrastructure and industrialisation projects of the NDP—on the experiences of *alteños*. Many of the participants complained about the ‘forgotten’ nature of El Alto and presented the cities of Santa Cruz and Cochabamba as the main benefactors of MAS government policy. The forgotten city framing in the context of the militants of El Alto was a key way that participants presented demands for resources for the city as legitimate.

Thus this chapter tells the story of transformism from below, on how and why it constantly needs renewing from above and its limitations. Although working-class organisations were demobilised—and there is ample evidence of social movements and their bases turning to the state, not the streets, in order to change El Alto—the potential of the rebel city is still present, a part of the fabric of the city that cannot be eradicated through top-down processes alone. It also hints at the ways that social organisations here have been incorporated into the state through informal contestation interest intermediation regimes, with popular protest still used as a way to direct local and national public policy.

Chapter 7
Pragmatic Politics in Plan 3000

The experiences of the *proceso de cambio* have ranged widely across Bolivia, sparking variegated reactions and responses from different sectors of the working-classes in different places. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the lowland city of Santa Cruz, capital of the department (also named Santa Cruz), home to soy barons and the autonomy movement that sought to unseat Morales in the first couple years of his presidency. Santa Cruz is a city that has been described as a duality (see Prado 2014), where transnational capital linked to the agroindustrial complex—particularly the production of soya (see McKay 2018)—and hydrocarbons contrast with the popular economy and the mass of working-classes, most of whom are migrants from the country's interior, found in the outskirts of the conurbation.

The goal of this chapter is to further tease out the unevenness of the *proceso de cambio* and trace the experiences of state formation and class formation in another political context, whilst also highlighting the common threads running through metropolitan spaces in Evo Morales' Bolivia. There are several dimensions to the argument advanced here. Firstly, the specific class structure and spatial organisation of the city of Santa Cruz, coupled with the region's particular insertion into the national economy and its weak history of working-class oppositional struggle, form the background of working-class politics in the city. The scope of everyday working-class politics is more limited here than in the other cities of the country's central axis (Cochabamba, El Alto and La Paz), and marked by weak rank-and-file participation in social organisations where such organisations exist. In this context, social organisations in the city of Santa Cruz did not launch an offensive against capital and the state like their *alteño* cousins, and have been confined to defensive battles against a belligerent and racist capitalist class. Labour unions have lacked both the radicalism of the miners and the structural power needed to transform union disputes into political struggles. The neighbourhood associations have not taken the lead in political struggles over the city, and nor have the market guilds [*gremios*]. Secondly, in this context social organisation leadership has tended to try and compensate for the lack of a mobilised base with top-down, technocratic strategies focused on cultivating good relationships with different levels of the state to attain limited, localised gains. This has

been dialectically reinforced by the tendency of a fragmented working-class rank-and-file to internalise various components of the dominant, *camba* ideology of the department and city.

Thirdly, this has led the MAS government in turn, not to deploy the same political strategy of transformism to build relationships with working-class groups, preferring to use and deepen existing vertical, corporatist and clienlist channels with social organisation where they already existed. The working-classes in Santa Cruz, although they have associations, are not politically organised, meaning that they have had a contrasting relationship with the MAS government in power compared to other civil society groups, including many of those in El Alto. Co-optation has not been such an issue here because, in short, there has been little to co-opt.

Finally, state-working-class relations in the city of Santa Cruz are further determined by both the internal stratification of the urban working-classes and the complex, politically fragmented nature of the Bolivian state, with internal relations that have been in a constant state of flux under the government of Evo Morales. Autonomy battles outlined in chapter 5 pitted the local arms of government in the department of Santa Cruz *against* the central government run by Morales. Since 2010 these frosty relations have thawed, changes that leave the working-classes here to contend with the shifting internal landscape of the state itself. In the face of such adversity, working-class organisations here have, I contend, turned to a type of state managerialism, trying to evince technocratic responses to public policy suggestions from local governments and building pragmatic alliances with different political actors.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. Firstly, I sketch out the urban spaces, working-classes and forms of capital accumulation present in the city of Santa Cruz, positioning it within the regional dynamics of the department. This provides the political economic context of the relationship between the *cruceño* working-classes and the MAS government. Secondly, I examine the relationship between the MAS and working-class social organisations. I focus on the Battle of Plan 3000, framed by some (such as Marxa Chávez and Raúl Zibechi) as the apogee of working-class radicalism in Santa Cruz under the MAS, and outline how the lack of offensive, definite political action has meant that co-optation of social organisations here was unnecessary. Thirdly, I look at the moving of the market of the Rotonda, Plan 3000, as a moment of pragmatic working-class politics, where the local leadership have fostered technocratic relations with the local government in order to obtain a new, local market.

I discuss how shifting class dynamics and relationships with different levels of the state have influenced the project, and outline how the lack of rank-and-file action has led to politics where the leadership has taken a principal role in pursuing more pragmatic goals.

Urban Space, Class Structure and Capital Accumulation in the City of Santa Cruz

The greater metropolitan area of Santa Cruz is comprised of five municipal districts: Warnes, Cotoca, La Guardia, Porongo and El Torno (Urzagasti 2014a, 33). The city, thanks to the 1960s planning project Plan Technit, is organised in concentric rings, although subsequently it has surpassed its envisioned limits and sprawled out into the surrounding countryside. The first ring contains the old colonial city (the limits of the city in the 1950s), and the city becomes (generally) poorer and more disorganised as one progresses out through the rings.[219] Whilst the internationally orientated elite frequent the shopping malls of Equipetrol, the cafés around the old colonial plaza 24 de Septiembre and exclusive residential enclaves such as Colina Urubó to the north-west of the city-centre, the working-classes are found in self-constructed *barrios* outside the fourth ring (see figure 7.1 below). These *barrios* are presented in the public imaginary as dirty, unruly, crime-ridden and dangerous, none more so than my second case study, district 8 of Santa Cruz, Cuidadela Andrés Ibáñez, more commonly known as Plan 3000 (Vaca Añez 2016).

The city of Santa Cruz witnessed massive population growth in the second half of the twentieth century. It grew from approximately 50,000 inhabitants in 1950 to 1,455,000 in 2012 (INE 2012a), rising to over 2 million people by 2016 (INE 2016). Much of this urbanisation has been unplanned and the city has spread out in an erratic fashion, transforming sandy grasslands, swamps and rubbish dumps into urban neighbourhoods. Given the informal nature of much of this growth, it is highly likely that the official population has been underestimated, with many *cruceños* contending the figure to be well over the official figure of 2 million inhabitants. Migration to the department of Santa Cruz began to grow during the late-1950s with the completion of

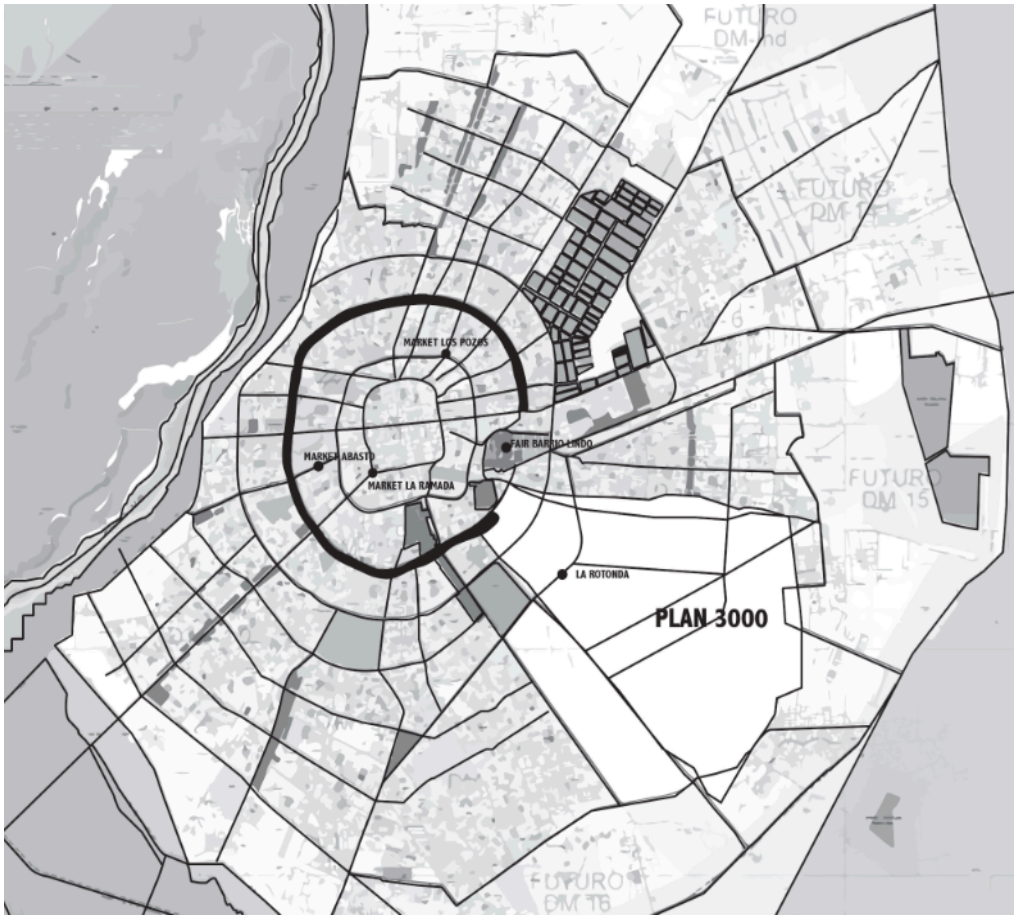
[219] There are now between 10 and 15 rings depending on who you speak to. The outer rings do not pass all the way round the city and are interrupted by sugar cane plantations, the River Piraí and other obstacles.

the Cochabamba-Santa Cruz highway and government incentives for highland peasants to move to the agricultural frontier. The population of the city of Santa Cruz then exploded from the mid-1970s onwards as the policies of dictator Hugo Banzer directed resources from the rest of the country into the department of Santa Cruz, sparking a construction boom in the department capital. The processes of de-peasantisation and relocation during neoliberalism intensified these migration flows, from both the highland regions of La Paz, Oruro and Potosí, and from the surrounding lowland countryside increasingly appropriated for agroindustrial production. In recent years, however, migrants have also come from the cities of La Paz, El Alto and Cochabamba in search of better employment opportunities and because of expanding supply networks in the popular economy (discussed below). They have mostly settled in the popular *barrios* outside the fourth ring of the city.

Plan 3000 exemplifies this trend. Although, as outlined in chapter 2, Plan 3000 was formed by some 3000 relocated families after the River Piraí burst its banks in 1983, after 1985 the effects of neoliberal reforms and droughts brought indigenous and working-class people from all corners of the country to 'El Plan'. The upshot was that Plan 3000 grew from a neighbourhood designed for 10,000 people to the unplanned, poorly connected urban sprawl of over 300,000 inhabitants it is today (Zibechi 2009). The heart of Plan 3000 is the informal commercial centre of the Rotonda (the Roundabout), which bears a striking resemblance to the Ceja in El Alto, not least because migrants from the *altiplano* also make up a significant proportion of Plan 3000's residents. Stalls painted blue line the thoroughfares that extend from the Rotonda's central roundabout. Street vendors occupy these stalls throughout the day until well into the evening, hawking their wares: everything from furniture to building materials, second hand clothes to local culinary delicacies, the smell of which mixes with the stench of rotting rubbish to create a sickly sweet aroma. Plan 3000 is characterised by a diverse ethnic mix and, by Santa Cruz standards, strong social organisations (themselves a result of the severe lack of public services and the need to self-organise and self-build the neighbourhood) drawing comparisons with the radicalism of El Alto (see Chávez 2008, 2009, Zibechi 2009, 2010). As Daniel Suárez, a leader in the Rotonda, told me, 'Plan 3000 is to Santa Cruz what El Alto is to La

Paz'.[220] Whilst I do maintain that there are definite similarities in the spatial organisation of the Plan 3000 and the composition of the working-classes here, my argument diverges from those of Raúl Zibechi and Marxa Chávez, as I contend the radicalism of the working-classes here is minimal due to their political history and experience of class.

Figure 7.1: Map of Santa Cruz



Source: Alejandra Rocabado

The massive population growth of Santa Cruz has long proved incompatible with the modernist planned infrastructure of the Plan Technit, which did not factor in urban migration flows of such magnitude (Kirshner 2011, 102).[221] Most of the residents of Santa Cruz have self-constructed, with the general secretary of the Constructors

[220] Daniel Suárez, President, Asociación Gremial Copacabana de la Rotonda Plan 3000, interview, Plan 3000, 06/04/2017. Marxa Chávez (2010, 122) also reported being told the same thing.

[221] In this sense, argues Kirshner (2011, 102), Santa Cruz exhibits similarities with the development of Cochabamba noted by Goldstein (2004).

Union in Santa Cruz Fernando Alcoba estimating that up to 90 percent of residents in places like Plan 3000 have built their own houses.[222]

Many of the migrants who come to the popular *barrios* of Santa Cruz have worked in construction, according to Alcoba, from building new apartment blocks in La Paz to working as far afield as Argentina and even Spain. An investigation by Centro de Estudios sobre Desarrollo Urbano y Regional (Center for Urban Development Studies, CEDURE) stressed the collective nature of self-construction, with family, neighbourhood and other interpersonal networks key to building projects (Prado et al. 2011, 93). These self-construction projects have some progressive potentials, but are limited by the material economic situation of the family, and the shared knowledge and construction skills of them and their extended networks, as well as the availability of local government assistance—something that is more often than not lacking in the poorer neighbourhoods like Plan 3000 (Prado et al. 2011, 92).

Table 7.1: Household Services in the City of Santa Cruz (%)

Santa Cruz (%)	**2001 Census**	**2012 Census**
House made of Brick	92.8	94.3
House made of Adobe	1.1	1.4
Water service (in house)	91.8	94.0
Water service (out of house)	4.4	5.0
Household with electricity	92.5	98.8
Household with gas	90.1	94.8

Source: INE 2001 and 2012a

Despite the unplanned and self-made character of much of Santa Cruz, the INE census data suggests that it is well served by basic services, as table 7.1 demonstrates. As of 2012, over 94 percent of houses had an in-house water supply, almost 99 percent electricity and 95 percent gas. Again, as with the *alteño* case, this is likely to be an overestimate given the rapid and informal character of urbanisation in Santa Cruz, and many of the poorer neighbourhoods do not have paved roads and are susceptible to flooding during the rainy season. A survey of over 6000 homes found that over a quarter of respondents in Plan 3000 were dissatisfied with their living

[222] Fernando Alcoba, General Secretary, Federación Sindical de los Trabajadores Constructores de Santa Cruz, interview, Santa Cruz, 22/03/2017.

quarters (Prado et al. 2011, 46). Animals are a common sight in the outer rings of the city. Dogs patrol the dirt roads in packs, and horses, with the front legs loosely tied together to prevent them from running, roam Plan 3000, often accompanied by their calves.

Figure 7.2: Photo of a horse with its calf, Plan 3000

Source: Author's photo

Most *cruceños* speak Spanish as their first language, although a handful speak Quechua (5.9%) or Aymara (1.5%) at home (INE 2012a). Although the demographics of Santa Cruz differ from the highlands, the immense contrast with the data presented for El Alto in the previous chapter also reflects the extreme discrimination that highland migrants—or *kollas* as they are known in Santa Cruz—faced for many years. This has been internalised by those who live in the city, who explain the stripping of indigenous identity and traits as part of the inherent 'nature' of the *camba*, the colloquial name for someone who lives in Santa Cruz (and as we saw in chapter 5, a key part of the pro-autonomy movement). For self-identifying *cambas*, *cambas* are friendly, speak Spanish and importantly are not part of any indigenous group,[223] although they do not necessarily have to be born in Santa Cruz as Carlos, the vice-president of one of the associations of the Rotonda, explained to me:

[223] As discussed previously, the *Camba* identity incorporates a folkloricised Guaraní identity but is *not* considered Guaraní in and of itself (see Gustafson 2006, Plata 2008).

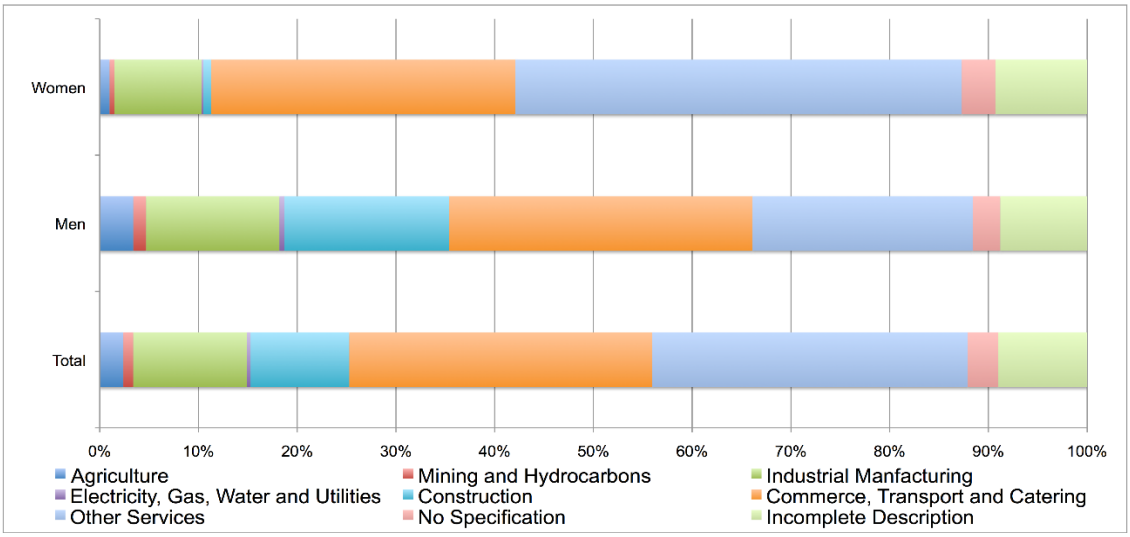
> Here in Plan 3000, most people are from the interior, from Cochabamba, Potosí, La Paz, Oruro, Sucre. Now there are few *cruceños* here, they all live in the centre. But the people here, everybody now wants to be *camba*, they are more *camba* than those of us born in Santa Cruz![224]

Hard work and hospitality, it is argued, makes a *camba*.[225] As the popular *cruceño* saying goes, 'the *camba* is born wherever she wants' [*el camba nace dónde quiere*].

The Working-Classes of Santa Cruz

As graph 7.1 demonstrates, the majority of *cruceños* work in services and commerce. Manufacturing jobs make up 11.5 percent and commerce 30.8 percent of total employment, with little difference between genders across these sectors. However, far more men work in construction (16.7%) and far more women are employed in services, including domestic services (45.2%).

Graph 7.1: Employment by Economic Activity 2012[226]



Source: Adapted from INE 2012a

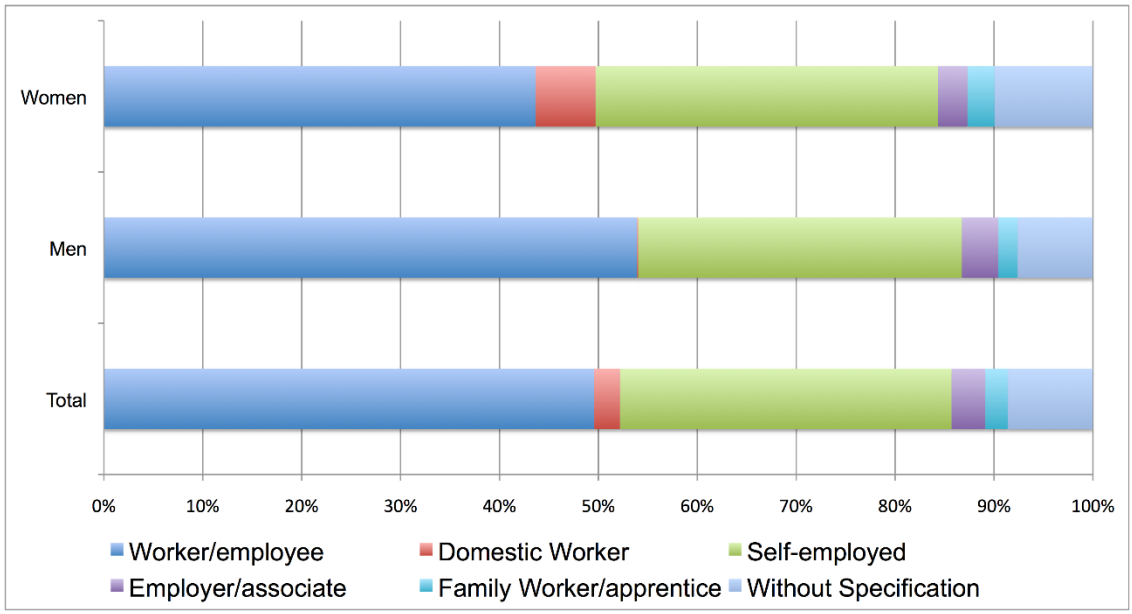
[224] Carlos, Vice-President, Asociación Flor de Mayo la Única, interview, Plan 3000, 02/02/2017.

[225] Anon, neighbour, Plan 3000, interview, Plan 3000, 02/02/2017, Ernesto Urzagasti Saldías, architect and urban planner, Private University of Santa Cruz, interview, Santa Cruz, 08/04/2017.

[226] Unfortunately INE use different metric for studying the labour market than CEDLA, and CEDLA have not published a serious study on Santa Cruz since the 1990s due to their limited resources and location in La Paz. Therefore direct comparisons with El Alto are difficult, although my goal here is to sketch out where people are positioned in the labour market and their contribution to GDP production.

The forms of employer-employee relations help clarify some features of working-class experiences in the city. Roughly 50 percent of the active EAP are workers/employees (although this tells us little about the quality of employment), whilst one-thirds are 'self-employed', a category that overstates those actually self-employed and obscures what is most likely hidden wage-labour (see Breman 2015). The majority of those who fall into this category work in a small organisation in the popular economy. Only 3.4 percent are employers on INE's metric, meaning that the proportion of the population accumulating capital is small (although probably not quite this small due to the opaque dynamics of the popular economy). More men are employees and more women are self-employed or domestic workers.

Graph 7.2: Employment by Employer-Relation 2012



Source: Adapted from INE 2012a

The labour market is loosely organised through informal kinship networks and by place of origin. Most of the bus drivers are established migrants from either Oruro or Cochabamba (Urzagasti 2014b, 91–92), whilst *paceño* and *cochabambino* migrants predominate in the spaces of the popular economy (Tassi et al. 2015, 52–53).[227]

[227] People from Cochabamba, *cochabambinos*, are famed for their culinary skills and enormous portion sizes.

The city of Santa Cruz is an important commercial space and node within the popular economy of the larger region, acting as a distribution point for a number of goods. Firstly, food and other agricultural products cultivated in the surrounding arable areas are sold here. As well as producing soya and beef for export, the department of Santa Cruz also produces 70 percent of Bolivia's food (Prado 2014, 11). Secondly, the large *mayorista* (wholesale) market Barrio Lindo is a major distribution point for clothes, many of which are imported from neighbouring Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay whose borders are (relatively) nearby (Tassi et al. 2015, 52). São Paulo and Buenos Aires are major production nodes for textiles and clothes, with Bolivian migrants making up a large proportion of the workforces there (Forment 2015, 118, Gago 2012, 64, Ikemura Amaral, n.p.); and Paraguay has become one of the central nodes of the popular economy in the region of South America as a whole over recent years (Lins Ribeiro 2006, 2009, Rabossi 2012). It is no surprise, then, that Barrio Lindo is the largest clothes market in the country, and many of the clothes on sale in the Rotonda of Plan 3000 are bought wholesale from Barrio Lindo. Many of the textile workshops hidden in and amongst the residential streets of Plan 3000 make clothes for the Barrio Lindo market.[228] Thirdly, as Bolivia's largest metropolitan area Santa Cruz creates a large part of the country's internal demand for consumables, and *paceño* traders bring goods from 16 de Julio or Los Huyustos to sell in Santa Cruz. For example, the market La Ramada on the first ring is a massive electronics market controlled by *paceño* migrants who have significant economic power (Tassi et al. 2015, 54). 'A house with three shops in La Ramada has a monthly rent of US$1000', Daniel Suárez told me.[229] Whether this figure is accurate or not, there are visible class distinctions within the popular economy, articulated by market vendors in Santa Cruz through talk of the traders of the Ramada moving a lot of money [*se mueve la plata*].

Despite the importance of some wholesale markets in Santa Cruz, most people working in commerce have small stalls selling a modest amount of goods, including those found in Plan 3000. As Christian Zeballos, president of the Asociación Flor de Mayo la Única (Unique Mayflower Association) in the Rotonda was keen to stress:

[228] I cannot confirm the exact extent of small-scale textile manufacturing in Plan 3000, but from speaking to neighbours at a local football match I played in on the local pitch, it appeared to be fairly prevalent. All of my fellow players worked making clothes, a fact I found out by *boleando* [the *cruceño* word for chewing coca] with them in-between games.

[229] Daniel Suárez, President, Asociación Gremial Copacabana de la Rotonda Plan 3000, interview, Plan 3000, 06/04/2017.

> We are retail [*minorista*] merchants, we do not bring large quantities of goods from elsewhere to sell. About 70–80 percent of merchants in Santa Cruz and across the other departments of the country have small stalls [*puestos*]. Only if you're lucky do you have a large shop or two and only then can you think about importing products.[230]

In other words, hidden wage-labour predominates in commerce and most market vendors are part of the urban working-classes, working as under conditions of informality and precarity similar to those of their *alteño* counterparts.[231] Many of the market guilds that form the 19 associations of the Rotonda were formed because the lack of formal employment opportunities in Plan 3000 meant that the associated traders had to find other ways to reproduce themselves.[232]

Experiences of Working-Class Organisation in Santa Cruz

The working-classes are organised and arranged through a configuration of social organisations. However, spatially uneven historical processes of state formation and class formation, as well as differences in the way Santa Cruz was integrated into the national, regional and global economies,[233] have affected the forms and functions of social organisations here.

Firstly, labour unions are organised through their departmental matrix, the Central Obrera Departmental-Santa Cruz (Departmental Workers' Central of Santa Cruz, COD-Santa Cruz). The COD-Santa Cruz is markedly different from the other departmental matrices of the highlands, principally because of the absence of the miners as a leading and organising force. Most of the union leaders who pass through the offices in the city of Santa Cruz are clad in denim shirts and jeans adorned with the state hydrocarbons firm YPFB insignia, although labour leader Celestino Vacaflor explained that the healthcare workers and teachers—the sectors that were most active

[230] Christian Zeballos, President, Asociación Flor de Mayo la Única, interview, Plan 3000, 02/02/2017. This does not mean that there is no petty bourgeoisie here, only that hidden wage-labour greatly outnumbers the groups accumulating capital in Plan 3000.
[231] Unfortunately the data to show this is not available for Santa Cruz in the same way that it is for El Alto. However, given the similarities between the issues raised in meetings and interviews between the two cities, this is likely the case.
[232] Juan Escalera, President, 18 de Marzo, interview, Plan 3000, 30/01/2017.
[233] Here I do not mean that these economies are separable or discrete, but different scales of the same fragmented and contradictory social totality.

in the nadir of the Bolivian labour movement nationally during the 1990s—are the most radical sectors.[234]

Although gas workers appear to have significant structural power because gas is the country's major source of export and fiscal revenue, the division of the YPFB into three entities during capitalisation (see chapter 3) separated the production process between different firms, breaking the previous collective bargaining power of the gas workers' union (Haarstad 2009, 243–44). During the neoliberal period, cut-rate royalty and taxation schemes and the agreement to build a pipeline to connect Bolivian gas reserves with large Brazilian markets incentivised investment in Bolivia's hydrocarbons sector, which replaced mining as the major source of state revenue (Kaup 2013). However, private investment was focused on developing Bolivia's known reserves rather than in exploration, creating few jobs (Kaup 2013, 1844), and the size of the YPFB workforce shrank from 8500 workers in 1985 to 700 in 2006 (Haarstad 2009, 244). The 'nationalisation' of hydrocarbons in 2006 and the re-centring of the YPFB as the main player and obligatory partner to transnational firms in exploration did not massively increased employment in the sector, with YPFB following principles of 'economic efficiency', maintaining a slimline workforce (Haarstad 2009, 247). Most workers employed by the YPFB work downstream, whilst those working at the point of extraction are majority non-unionised labourers employed by Transnational Companies (TNCs), which organise the labour force through individual negotiations that promote competition between workers and individual interests (Haarstad 2009, 245). Thus, gas workers have not been able to fully use their structural position and disruption potential under Morales. The gas workers became tied to the government's political project and unable to use their apparent structural power to become a political force within the Bolivian labour movement.[235]

Given the defensive position of the labour movement and the lack of self-organisation of the working-classes across the department of Santa Cruz, the COD-Santa Cruz has become aligned with the MAS and one of its more vocal pragmatic

[234] Celestino Vacaflor, Secretary of Conflicts, COD-Santa Cruz, interview, Santa Cruz, 14/02/2017.

[235] I have made this argument elsewhere related to the overall position of the labour movement under Evo Morales. See McNelly 2018.

supporters within the Bolivian labour movement.[236] The immense challenges faced by the COD-Santa Cruz, in both the city and department of Santa Cruz, has led them to argue for continued support for the government, contending that some assistance is better than the situation under previous governments, when the lowland bourgeoisie was able to easily quash any semblance of working-class organisation or resistance. The MAS, for their part, have given ostensible material support to the COD-Santa Cruz, as their shiny new union offices demonstrate, but trade union organising remains difficult in this context.

Figure 7.3: The new seat of the COD-Santa Cruz

Source: Author's photo

As Sosimo Paniagua Revollo, COD-Santa Cruz General Secretary stated:

> we have 30,000 workers across the department of Santa Cruz but there are so many more who really do not know what a trade union

[236] Authors field notes. The alignment of the COD-Santa Cruz with the MAS angered some of the old labour leadership, as the testimony of former executive secretary Jesús Yavari Cortez (2007) demonstrates.

> organisation is. There are over 5,000 industries in Santa Cruz and very few are covered by trade unions.[237]

Indeed, according to the 2012 census, there were 1,233,000 economically active workers (out of a total of just over 2 million working-aged adults over the age of 10) in the department of Santa Cruz (INE 2012a). This means that the coverage of the COD-Santa Cruz is minimal across the working-classes in the department and highlights the extent of the marginalised position of the labour movement in Santa Cruz. It also demonstrates passivity of the working-classes and the lack of dynamism in the labour movement regionally.

Secondly, neighbourhood councils, organised through their matrix (the FEJUVE-Santa Cruz) are important social organisations in the lives of the working-classes of Santa Cruz. As in El Alto, the MAS has split the city's neighbourhood council matrix organisation by setting up their own affiliated FEJUVE, although the MAS-faction appeared to be marginalised and have a more limited scope than the CONALJUVE-endorsed organisation (and the MAS-affiliated FEJUVE in El Alto).[238] However, the FEJUVE-Santa Cruz is markedly different from many FEJUVEs across the country, especially that of my other case study, El Alto. While most neighbourhood leaders across Bolivia stress the civic nature of the FEJUVE—the neighbourhood associations were formed from the need for public services within a neighbourhood[239]—the more political nature of the FEJUVE-El Alto becomes apparent when counterposed to its *cruceño* counterpart, which was completely unconcerned with more general political developments. Participants in the meetings I attended preferred discussions about mundane local issues above political debate—such as children's playgrounds, repairs to the FEJUVE offices and, unbelievably, the pros and cons of spending US$1,300 on a state-of-the-art laminating machine capable of producing 'unfalsifiable' ID cards for the FEJUVE leadership (a discussion that spanned several meetings). The one meeting where concrete political action was discussed and planned—a local meeting in Plan 3000—was a march in defence of the municipal government led by conservative politician Percy Fernández. Every aspect of the planning—from the banner-making after the meeting to the organisation of a

[237] Sosimo Paniagua Revollo, General Secretary, COD-Santa Cruz, interview, Santa Cruz, 17/02/2017.
[238] Abad Lino Arteaga, President, FEJUVE-Santa Cruz, interview, Santa Cruz, 08/03/2017.
[239] Abad Lino Arteaga, 08/03/2017.

micro (not a minibus!) to take activists to the government offices[240]—intensely contrasted with my experience of the FEJUVE-El Alto. Moreover, compared to the *alteño* meetings discussed in the previous chapter (and to my neighbours in Plan 3000), nearly everyone at the FEJUVE-Santa Cruz meetings had noticeably paler skin and arrived in expensive 4x4 trucks. The citywide matrix was led by a lawyer, and the neighbourhood councils loosely mapped onto existing class hierarchies in the city. This being said, the FEJUVE-Santa Cruz leaders from the professional classes were quick to differentiate themselves from the regional elites who control the Comité Pro-Santa Cruz, stressing the difference in interests and strategies whilst simultaneously acknowledging moments of cooperation and alignment.

The structure of the neighbourhood associations and their district-wide organisation is hierarchical, with demands and needs identified by local neighbours passed up the structure, sometimes reaching the citywide FEJUVE-Santa Cruz. There are 15 districts in the city of Santa Cruz, and the FEJUVE-Santa Cruz, as in the *alteño* case, is drawn from the different districts.[241] Nonetheless, the structure of the FEJUVE-Santa Cruz differs to that of the FEJUVE-El Alto outlined in the previous chapter. Instead of leaders being in charge of particular roles, in Santa Cruz they have set up commissions to address issues, with each commission (ideally) having one representative from each district.[242] In the beginning of 2017 when I was doing my fieldwork in Santa Cruz, there were 18 commissions—ranging from groups on social security to education, and even to groups on the youth and the elderly—that would meet frequently and liaise with the relevant local-government authority, the Control Social de Santa Cruz (Social Control of Santa Cruz), to resolve problems raised by neighbours and make demands, reporting back to citywide FEUJVE-Santa Cruz meetings with regular updates.

Thirdly, the market vendors and *amulantes* are organised through market associations, *gremios* and their citywide Federation Departmental Única de Santa Cruz (Unique Departmental Federation of Santa Cruz). In 2000, there were 22 municipal markets with over 20,000 vendors, 30 private markets and countless informal *asentamiento* (settlement) markets. By 2007, there were a total of 88 markets:

[240] A *micro* is a slightly bigger size of transport than a minibus and synonymous with public transport in Santa Cruz.
[241] Carlos Díez, President, Social Control Santa Cruz, interview, Santa Cruz, 08/03/2017.
[242] Abad Lino Arteaga, 08/03/2017.

34 municipal, 36 private and 18 settlement markets (Kirshner 2010b, 168). Private and municipal markets are more likely to be found inside the innermost four rings, whereas the settlement markets are found in poorer neighbours, including Plan 3000, on the outer rings (Kirshner 2010b, 168, see also Salek 2007). Each market is divided into several associations that represent a section (determined by the place in the market or by the type of goods sold) of the marketplace and its vendors.

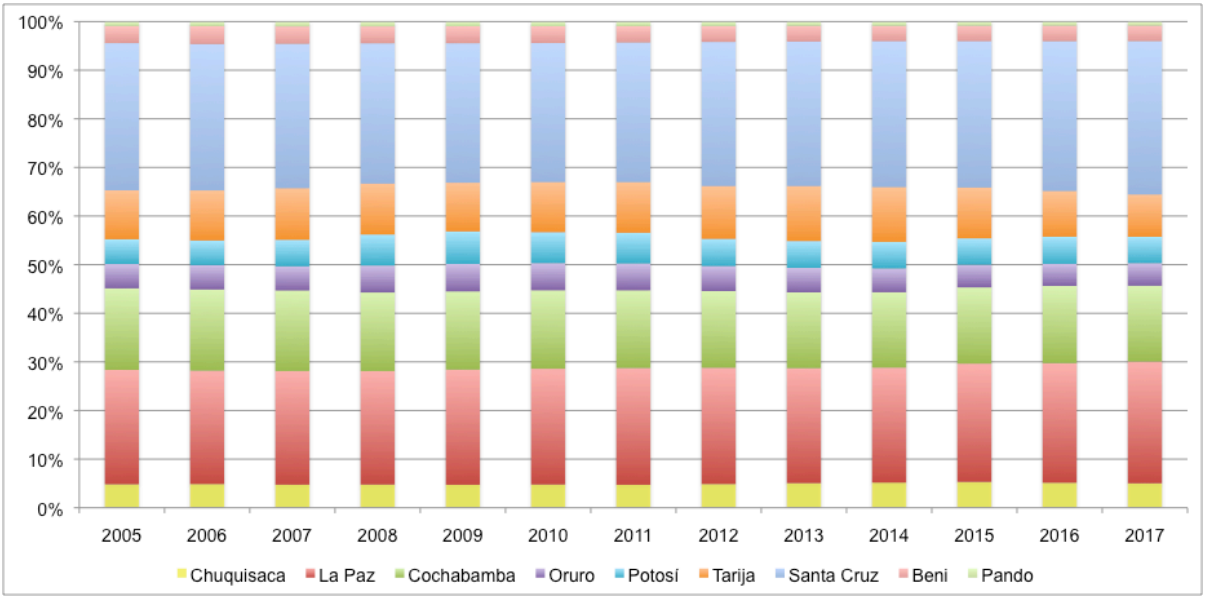
La Rotonda, the settlement market where I spent the most time and consequently know the best, is organised through 19 associations with some 2,500 affiliated members, which have a central elected committee that is, in turn, affiliated with the citywide federation.[243] The Rotonda was formed as the central market of 'Andrés Ibáñez' in July 1988 with one association, the Asociación de Comerciantes Minoristas del Mercado Central 'Andrés Ibáñez' (The Association of Retail Merchants of the Central Market 'Andrés Ibáñez') (Vaca Añez 2016, 232). It was originally built on the site of the hospital 'Virgen Milagrosa', so was forced to move across the road when the hospital was built, spreading along the other roads off the roundabout over time until its move to the new market in December 2017 (Vaca Añez 2016, 231). Over the years, as the market expanded the association has repeatedly split—largely due to the limited ability of larger associations to represent all of the their members, in part due to political differences, struggles and divides—forming the 19 associations that exist today. These associations have a radical reputation in Santa Cruz and beyond, on the one hand because of the negative stereotypes of Plan 3000 (and by extension its inhabitants) as dirty, crime-ridden and uncivilised, and on the other hand because of the events of September 2008, when Plan 3000 became the battleground against the autonomist movement and the civic governors coup discussed in chapter 5 (see Chávez, 2008, 2009, Chávez, Mokrani and Uriona Crespo 2011, Zibechi 2009). It was one of the bastions of MAS support during the initial years of Morales' government. However, as shall be discussed below, their relationship with the central government and the MAS political party has been fraught, with the MAS losing support in Plan 3000 in recent years.

[243] Juan Escalera, President, 18 de Marzo, interview, Plan 3000, 30/01/2017.

Sectors of Accumulation in Santa Cruz

The department of Santa Cruz is considered by many the most important geographical location in the Bolivian economy.

Graph 7.3: GDP Contribution by Department (% of Total Nominal GDP)



Source: Adapted from INE 2018

It is the principal producer of GDP in Bolivia, accounting for an average of 29.6 percent of national GDP between 2005 and 2017 (INE 2018). Proportionally, as graph 7.3 shows, the GDP contribution of each department has only changed slightly, although Tarija's in particular had a significant increase during the commodities boom which fell away after the fall in natural gas prices from 2013 onwards. This relative stasis compared to the rest of the country occurs despite Santa Cruz's nominal departmental GDP increasing 1.85-fold, and signals the continuing importance of key sectors of Santa Cruz's economy linked into transnational circuits of capital. The department of Santa Cruz has had an average nominal GDP-growth of 5.2 percent annually between 2005 and 2017, slightly above the national average of 4.9 percent over the same period (see tale 7.2).

Table 7.2: Nominal GDP growth by department 2005–2017

Department	Average 2005–2017
Bolivia	**4.9**
Chuquisaca	5.0
La Paz	5.1
Cochabamba	4.1
Oruro	4.3
Potosí	5.5
Tarija	5.4
Santa Cruz	**5.2**
Beni	3.8
Pando	4.0

Source: INE 2018

One of the features of Santa Cruz noted by many social investigators that study the city is its dual nature: a janus-faced place that is an advanced, internationally-orientated city and home to transnational capital linked to agroindustry and hydrocarbons; whilst simultaneously most urban spaces of the city are dominated by an informalised popular economy that provides employment in the tertiary sectors of commerce and services. This division is often framed as a political divide between progress/modernity and stagnation, as the comments of social control delegate Saúl Vanegas Largas demonstrate:

> The truth is that here in Santa Cruz we have people from every department in the country. There is a certain class of people… who are not interested in progress, they just want to be employed, to work and nothing else. But we always follow the path of progress, we do not stay still. We are one of the departments with the most forceful people, Santa Cruz has more intensity. What we want now is that all of the people realise their calm civil role. The government has fulfilled its development plan but these plans do not reach all the way to the bottom, to certain political areas.[244]

Santa Cruz is thus presented as modern and constantly progressing, even as certain sectors of the population—and note that Vanegas Lorgas starts the quotation by

[244] Saúl Vanegas Largas, delegate for district 15, Social Control, interview, Santa Cruz, 22/03/2017.

saying Santa Cruz is home to people from all over the country—are holding the city back, causing this obvious social, political and economic divide. However, the myth of the productive, modern city is dispelled by sociologist Ximena Soruco and her colleagues Wilfredo Plata and Gustavo Medeiros (2008) in the brilliant *Los Barones del Oriente* [The Barons of the East].[245] They convincingly show that the agribusiness sector upon which Santa Cruz has become so dependent is characterised by speculation, land grabbing and the constant extension of the agricultural frontier into the amazon rainforest.

Although the landowning elite of Santa Cruz has been internationally orientated since the times of the rubber boom and the integration of European immigrants into their ranks at the turn of the twentieth century (see Soruco 2008), the redistribution of land by dictator Hugo Banzer in the 1970s and the subsequent first soya boom 1993–1997 brought a new influx of transnational capital from Brazil, amongst other places (including from local Mennonite communities) (Medeiros 2008).[246] Such has been the expansion of agroindustrial production linked to transnational capital that started during the 1990s, that agricultural production in Santa Cruz is now dominated by global capital linked to six giant transnational conglomerates that control 75 percent of the global agrochemical market,[247] and four transnational firms that are responsible for 90 percent of the world's grain production (Castéñon 2017, 11–12).[248] This insertion of Santa Cruz into the international market as a regional producer of soya has also been important in cultivating the myth of modernity in Santa Cruz and was a key cornerstone of the autonomist movement (see Plata 2008).

Since the warming of relations between the MAS and the political and economic elites of the department of Santa Cruz circa-2010, the government has pursued a political programme that has consolidated the agroindustrial complex in the department and encouraged the expansion of the agricultural frontier (McKay 2018, 418). The concessions made to the Santa Cruz business elite by García Linera in negotiations over the final CPE text after the second session of the Constituent

[245] The title of the book is undoubtedly a counterposition of the Santa Cruz elite to the three tin barons of the twentieth century (see chapter 2).
[246] The mennonites hold a unique position in Santa Cruz and have a history in the department that long pre-dates soya production. See Kopp (2015) for an overview of the establishment of their colonies and their integration into local agroindustrial production.
[247] These firms are DuPont, Monsanto, Syngenta, Dow, Bayer and BASF.
[248] The four grain giants are Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), Bunge, Cargill and Louis Dreyfus.

Assembly—including ‘a non-retroactivity clause that exempts existing agrarian property from the new five-thousand-hectare limit on the size of landholdings’ (Wolff 2016, 128)—have proved key in continuing forms of capital accumulation through agribusiness in the department of Santa Cruz. Further concessions were granted in the passing of Law 3545, ostensibly designed with input from social organisations to enact an ‘agrarian revolution’ and food sovereignty, ensuring land serves a ‘socio-economic function’, redefining the expropriation of medium- and large-landholdings, distributing public lands for indigenous communities and preventing forced or bonded labour (McKay 2018, 411). However, after two-years of consultation with the Unity Pact the proposed document of the agrarian revolution was revised under the watchful eyes of the representatives of the agroindustrial elite—namely the Asociación de Productores de Oleaginosas y Trigo (Assocation of Oil and Wheat Producers, ANAPO) and the Cámara de Industria, Comercio, Servicios y Turismo (Chamber of Industry, Commerce, Services and Tourism, CAINCO)—who ensured favourable outcomes for agribusiness (Francescone 2012, 41–44). The results of these concessions have been stark: a 500 percent increase in cultivable surface area between 1991 and 2014 and a growth in annual soya production from 322,000 tonnes to over 2.8 million during the same period (Castéñon 2017, 20), whilst ‘the agrarian structure has been left largely unchanged as new forms of marginalization, exclusion, and debt relations exacerbate existing rural inequalities’ (McKay 2018, 417, see also McKay and Colque 2016).

While agricultural production advances into the increasingly distant agricultural frontiers of the Amazon rainforest, agroindustrial capital and its representatives are mostly based in the city of Santa Cruz. Particularly, importers and distributors of supplies, machinery, equipment and services linked to industrial agricultural production and the production of its derivatives—especially oils—have been brought to the city of Santa Cruz as a consequence of the industrialisation and internationalisation of agricultural production in Santa Cruz (Medeiros 2008, 205). Financial services and banking with international links have, unsurprisingly, boomed under these conditions (Medeiros 2008, 205), as have high end services such as private-members’ clubs and shopping malls.

Transnational capital has also been attached to the city by the continued importance of the department of Santa Cruz in hydrocarbons production. Santa Cruz is responsible for approximately 20 percent of Bolivia’s natural gas production and

most gas workers and company offices are based in the metropolitan area of Santa Cruz (INE 2018). The influx of capital has undoubtedly played a part in the sustained construction boom in Santa Cruz, which has used an average of 30 percent of the country's cement between 1994 and 2017 (INE 2018).

Table 7.3: Economic Structure of Santa Cruz (% of Total GDP)

Activity	% of Total GDP
Agriculture	2.8
Extractivism (hydrocarbons and metal, non-metal and mineral mining)	16.4
Manufacturing	13.6
Electricity, Gas and Water	5
Construction	3.3
Commerce	10.8
Hotels and Restaurants	3.6
Transport	10.1
Communications	1.4
Financial Services	7.5
Company Services	5
Housing Property	3.5
Public Administration	11.7
Domestic, Personal and Social Services	5.3

Source: UNDP 2015, 77

The urban structure of the economy of Santa Cruz does not capture all of these dynamics of capital accumulation, and agriculture only contributes under 3 percent of the city's total GDP production (see table 7.2). Nonetheless, as table 7.2 suggests, it does reveal the dual nature of the city. On the one hand, extractivism (16.4%) and sectors linked to extractivism—manufacturing (13.6%), financial services (7.5%) and company services (5%)—account for a significant proportion of GDP produced in the city of Santa Cruz. However, as the discussion on the labour market above demonstrated, these sectors create few employment opportunities. In contrast, commerce (10.8% of GDP), hotels and restaurants (3.6%), parts of the transport sector (10.1%) and domestic, personal and social services (5.3%) employ the vast

majority of the city's working-classes, but are not linked into the same transnational circuits of capital.

In short, the political economy of Santa Cruz is dominated by transnational capital linked to either the agroindustrial complex or natural gas extraction, industries with few forward or backward linkages into the local economy. However, the majority of working-class people in the city operate in the informalised sectors of commerce, hospitality, social, domestic or personal services found in the popular economy.

Relationships between the MAS and Social Organisations in Santa Cruz

Despite the myth of Santa Cruz being politically forgotten and isolated from the politics of the seat of government in the Andes (see Plata 2008, Soruco 2008), the *cruceño* elite have benefitted nicely from government policy since the dictatorship of *cruceño* Hugo Banzer, as discussed in chapter two (see also Gill 1987). However, the working-classes, peasantry and lowlands indigenous groups have not enjoyed the benefits of such ties and have a relationship with the government unique to that of their highland counterparts. In the context of no substantive land reform and periods of *de facto* immunity from the law for landowning elites, the lack of a history of trade union activity and the increasing transnationalisation and financialisation of agriculture and the production of its derivatives, the organising capacity of social organisations has remained weak. While the *alteña* organisations shut down the city of El Alto and toppled the government of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada in October 2003, Santa Cruz watched on from afar, with little to no social organisation involvement.

This, then, is a significantly different political context to that described in the last chapter, where the radical potential of social organisations was curtailed and movements pushing for change were aligned behind the MAS. The transformism that was so key to the political project of the MAS nationally, and that has shaped the politics of El Alto since the election of Morales, has not been present in Santa Cruz precisely because there was no moment of *catharsis* here. Despite the organising efforts of some leaders, *Cruceña* social organisations have never experienced the passage from 'objective to subjective' nor from 'necessity to freedom', their horizons of collective action never surpassing what Gramsci called economic corporatism (Gramsci Q10II §6, cited in Thomas 2009a, 263). Adverse conditions for working-class organising have meant that the horizons of struggles by social organisations in Santa

Cruz have never superseded the defence of the status quo and individual or sectional interests. Examining what is considered to be the most radical moment in the recent history of Santa Cruz—the 'Battle for Plan 3000' of 11 September 2008—suffices to demonstrate the limited political horizons of social organisations, even when—as in the Southern winter leading up to September 2008—they were set in motion and became organised movements.

The Battle of Plan 3000

The Battle of Plan 3000 was the culmination of the autonomy struggles over the first three years of the Morales administration. The day of 11 September 2008—that of the Porvenir massacre and the Battle of Plan 3000—marked the end of the autonomist movement, as the violent and racist nature of the movement's composite parts was laid bare. The violence against a group of peasants at Porvenir, which sparked national and international uproar, was undoubtedly decisive (Soruco 2011). However, Plan 3000 was where the MAS-aligned social movements clashed with Nación Camba and their proto-fascist youth-wing, Unión Juvenil Cruceñistas (Cruceño Youth Union, UJC), struggles that marked a vital moment in the defeat of the lowland elite's autonomy project.

Confrontations started on 4 May 2008 when the Comité Pro-Santa Cruz (Pro-Santa Cruz Committee, CPSC) and the Santa Cruz prefecture called 'an illegal referendum for the approval of a Statute of Departmental Autonomy' (Zibechi 2009). As previously explained, the autonomy movement in Santa Cruz couched their arguments in explicitly racist terms, using the distinction between highland '*kollas*' and lowland '*cambas*' as the basis for regional autonomy (see chapter 4). Given the ethnic diversity of Plan 3000, residents had been subject to abuse and violence by the UJC for many years, which acted as a type of 'enforcer' during civic strikes and autonomist actions like the referendum held that day (Zibechi 2009). However, 4 May 2008 was when residents of Plan 3000 finally decided to organise defence committees against the violence of the UJC (Chávez 2010, 126), proclaiming that the referendum vote concerned 'the autonomy statute of the rich' (Miranda 2012, 108). For the first time, huge numbers of people gathered at the Rotonda at the centre of Plan 3000 in defence of the *proceso de cambio*—but not necessarily the MAS. By the day of 5 May, the UJC had not entered Plan 3000 and residents felt they had won, building a sense of

solidarity between them (Chávez 2010, 129–31). Social investigator Marxa Chávez (2009, 7) argues that the social fabric of Plan 3000 began to be re-woven in this moment:

> the recreation of the social fabric, the Plan's first outpouring on May 4, the shaping of the first neighbourhood defence groups, speak to us of the beginnings of a grassroots and urban base in Bolivia.

As described in chapter 5, in the months leading up to the Battle of Plan 3000 on 11 September 2008, divisions within the country intensified, reaching crisis point on 15 August—the day Evo Morales' presidency was confirmed in a recall referendum with a two-thirds majority—when the UJC brutally attacked the Santa Cruz police commander (Zibechi 2009). This crisis approached its apogee with the occupation of public buildings and employer lockouts led by the UJC, which only ended in the fallout of the violence in Porvenir and the Battle of Plan 3000. In this moment Plan 3000 became the epicentre of the conflict, the place in space where the two-sides met. On 10 September the UJC arrived and attempted to encircle the Plan (Zibechi 2009), paying hundreds of drug addicts to attack the residents (Chávez 2009, 110–11). They were met by the resistance of the Plan 3000 residents, who took to the streets in defence of their neighbourhood. Eduardo Loayza, former director of the local Radio Integración—which kept residents up to date on every battle and skirmish during the violence—explained to Chávez (2009, 112) why the UJC attacked Plan 3000:

> The idea was for all of them to come in and burn the symbolic central part of the neighborhood… They attack the Plan because it is a symbol. Plan 3000 has no industry, no prefecture, no mayor's office, not a lot of money changes hands, it is simply working people. But the Plan is a symbol, a bastion of the left-wing in Santa Cruz. Thus taking over the Plan, taking over La Rotonda, destroying everything was a question of power… There was going to be violence, there was going to be a massacre.

This massacre, however, never came to fruition, thanks to the self-organisation and vigilance of the residents of Plan 3000. Resistance in the Plan was matched in this moment by a coalition of indigenous peoples, peasants, colonisers, street vendors and their guilds, workers and students that numbered 30,000 by some accounts (Zibechi 2010b, 145). *Cocaleros* marching from the Chapare joined indigenous peoples and peasants from the surrounding area came to Plan 3000 to show support for the forces

opposing the autonomy movement. The militancy shown in this moment—especially by the 19 associations of the Rotonda—consolidated the public image of Plan 3000 as rebellious, an identity that local leaders (including Loayza) further cultivated (e.g., see Loayza 2010, 7).

During the Battle of Plan 3000, thousands of local residents were mobilised and strong communal bonds were built through the struggle as the working-classes pushed back against the *cruceño* elite and their fascist youth group. However, the extent to which, as Chávez argues, the 'social fabric was rewoven', was limited. Whilst residents shared food and drinks during struggles, collective acts did not turn into political actions with lasting consequences. Collective decision-making and *cabildos* were conspicuous only by their absence, and the new forms of politics so evident in the Gas War of 2003 in El Alto were not present in the Battle of Plan 3000. Neither were struggles etched in space in the same way that they were in El Alto. Whereas in El Alto a complex network of trenches and barricades were dug throughout the city and coordinated through local meetings that fed into the city-wide strategy, transforming the city in that moment into a veritable battlefield of struggle that had to be crossed by youths on foot or bicycles, in Plan 3000 the struggles never surpassed the simple defence of a parameter. In fact, whereas the social forces unleashed in 2003 could be described as creative, offensive or even pregnant with the possibility of social change, the Battle of Plan 3000 was a defensive moment marked by negation. The struggle was to 'defend the Rotonda' (Chávez 2009, 101–105) in the absence of any other option (Zibechi 2009). Even the most radical statements never contained the possibilities of change, as the comments of one Plan 3000 resident cited by Chávez (2009, 113) reveals:

> We were fighting through the use of our reason and our consciences; our strength was in our conviction, the dignity, principles, the defence of our homeland, and the elimination of everything that oligarchy represents.

Although the residents differentiate their struggle from the drugged-up army paid by the UJC on the basis of dignity and principles, central to these principles and dignity were the protection of a unified Bolivia and the *negation* of the principles of the *cruceño* oligarchy at that moment (those previously outlined as racism, violence and capitalist accumulation that benefits a small section of the population). Despite the apparent boldness of his words, these principles are hardly comparable to the radical goals and

demands of social organisations and their bases in 2003 El Alto. Indeed, how the memory of these events was framed almost a decade later by local leader Enrique Gonzalo Alba is telling of the defensive nature of this moment:

> We gathered because they were going to burn our market. More than just our market, each one of us was defending his or her livelihood because his or her stall contained all the merchandise, his or her business. So we met and we said “let them come and find us barricaded in the Rotonda". It felt like days and nights of interminable struggle… the flares [*petardos*] seemed like something out of a movie, when bullets whizz overhead… We were chewing coca [*boleando*] and there were lots of drinks. We were there a day or two until help came from other markets, from other provinces, even other departments. Because the Plan resisted when others were almost defeated, we won… we were *masistas*, we fought for the party and we defended the market.[249]

There are a number of important features to Gonzalo Alba’s account. Firstly, the levels of violence felt during the siege are palpable in Gonzalo Alba’s account and are key to his memory of September 2008. This fear is amplified by the potential loss of his livelihood, a fact that serves to underscore the high levels of precarity experienced by the market vendors of the Rotonda. Secondly, nowhere in Gonzalo Alba’s account is the struggle presented as anything but defensive: defence of the market, defence of the party and, ultimately, defence of the president. Thirdly, it is worth highlighting the final part of the quotation, where Gonzalo Alba stresses his *previous* allegiance to the MAS and to Evo Morales (we *were masistas*). Many of the residents of Plan 3000 were, as he says, *masistas*, but they are no longer. Although many people had positive things to say about Morales as a president—no doubt influenced in part by his sublime-profane nature discussed in chapter 5—they never presented themselves as current members of the party, let alone *militants* of the MAS as was the case in El Alto.

No Catharsis, No Transformism

What the Battle of Plan 3000 underscores is that the particular configuration of the working-classes and their historical experiences of class struggle in Santa Cruz have

[249] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, executive secretary of the 19 Associations of the Rotonda, interview, Santa Cruz, 04/04/2017.

created state-society relations that contrast with other urban areas in the country. There was no moment of catharsis in the city of Santa Cruz. Even in what is considered the most radical moment in the city's recent history, the motives of social organisations were defensive, galvanised by objective collective interests. Whilst residents of Plan 3000 speak with pride of their actions in this moment, no lasting political subjectivities were created; there was no equivalent of the 'militant of the Gas War' found in El Alto. It is not only amongst the residents of Plan 3000 that structural and historical conditions have curtailed the political potential of the working-classes, although as they are considered the most militant sector of *cruceño* society they are a good point of departure. As discussed above, the labour movement and its formalised organisation, the COD-Santa Cruz, has never had a revolutionary political subjectivity, largely thanks to the absence of the radical, Marxist currents of the miners of Oruro and Potosí. Likewise, the outline of the FEJUVE-Santa Cruz above underscores that it does not merely *proclaim* to be a civic institution (as is the case with the much more political El Alto federation), it *is* a civic organisation, a fact reflected in its actions, which appeared never to surpass the mundane everyday level of localised infrastructure and civic concerns.

The extent of the reactionary nature of working-class activity in urban Santa Cruz is reflected, I would argue, in the counterposition of residents of Santa Cruz against the more belligerent inhabitants of La Paz and El Alto shown by the comments of many of my interviewees. Many of the quotations are inflected with the discourse of the autonomist movement, stressing the uncivilised nature of the indigenous population of the *altiplano* whilst simultaneously underscoring the civilised and hardworking nature of the *camba*. In the most extreme example, Nicolás Chuvey Guesase, the Social Control delegate from district 7, explained the difference between different parts of the country thus:

> Every department has its own tradition and its own vision. We are talking about the east here—Santa Cruz, Beni, Pando and all that is the east—we are not aggressive people like in El Alto, like the west [highlands]. In the west what they do not like, they do not like and if they have to kill, they kill, like the *ponchos rojos* [red ponchos].[250] In El Alto there are *ponchos rojos* who decapitate

[250] Red ponchos symbolise leadership in the highland provinces of La Paz, near Lake Titicaca. The *ponchos rojos* is the name given to a group of Aymara leaders from that region who have

> dogs and drink their blood. Here in the east this does not exist. Obviously those in the east have more reason to work and there is no discord like in the west.[251]

For Chuvey Guesase and many others in Santa Cruz, racist prejudice and stereotypes are intertwined with ideals of hard work, reflecting the relative internalisation of the dominant regional ruling-class *camba* ideology. In this context protest, associated with the *ponchos rojos* and El Alto more generally, is framed as irrational, uncivilised and against the 'reason' that permeates the 'modern' city of Santa Cruz. Although this perspective (one of a local municipal government official) is explicitly racist in ways that other comparisons with the *altiplano* are not, arguments about the differences in protest and work are also present in some form or another, amongst many working-class residents. Christian Zebellos, president of one of the 19 associations of the Rotonda, stresses the sacrifice and commitment that the working people of Santa Cruz give to Bolivia as a country, and the 'responsibility' of his organisation and its bases when protesting. For Zeballos, definite political action is an extreme step to take, a final resort:

> I think that we give our sweat, blood and tears for our country [*i.e., ponemos el pecho al país*] more than anyone else. We do not block, we do not march, we do not do many things other than work for the good of our country. But in Plan 3000 when we have to march, everyone feels it.[252]

Unlike the previous quotation, Zeballos does not reject protest in of itself as uncivilised. He simultaneously implies that others [read the *altiplano*] block and march too much but, when needed, this tactic is an effective one in Plan 3000. Again, this points to protest *only* emerging out of an urgent collective need as action that does not transform political subjectivities, with Zeballos keen to stress the roles of good citizens and workers in the current capitalist system performed by the traders of the Rotonda. The need to work for the residents of Santa Cruz was a recurring theme throughout my interviews, unsurprising given the levels of economic migration to the city over the

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been associated with the government since 2006. There is no evidence of them ever killing animals or people as Chuvey Guesase claims. See Iamamoto (2015, 83–84) for a detailed discussion of the exact origins and significance of the name.

[251] Nicolás Chuvey Guesase, delegate for district 7, Social Control, interview, Santa Cruz, 22/03/2017.

[252] Christian Zeballos, President, Asociación Flor de Mayo la Única, interview, Plan 3000, 02/02/2017.

past forty years. 'Everybody comes to Santa Cruz to work', Ernesto Urzagasti reminded me,[253] whilst my neighbour Ramiro, in Plan 3000, used self-deprecating humour to capture the work-driven nature of Santa Cruz as a city and its inhabitants:

> It's not that we are more passive, but that we are, in my opinion, careless/lazy [*conchudos*]. If you earn money and nobody takes it from you, you see nothing more than your salary. You do not see neighbours, your street, that is how it is over here.[254]

Whilst these perspectives are visibly influenced by the discourse of the autonomist movement defeated in the wake of the Battle of Plan 3000, it also reveals an aversion to political confrontations, or in Gramscian terms, the economic corporatism of working-class protest here. Santa Cruz, as discussed above, is one of the major centres of capital accumulation in Bolivia and presents itself as an economic hub. Political scientist Fran Espinoza (2015, 124) shows that this is reflected in public opinion about the sources of power, with 41 percent of respondents in Santa Cruz stating that power principally derives from the economy of Santa Cruz and money (as opposed to 26 percent thinking the executive was the major source of power). In other words, work and money are vital to the ways in which the transnational elite, emergent bourgeoisie of the popular economy and the working-classes in Santa Cruz conceive the world and how to change it, with economic progress having (somewhat) displaced political action as the major source of social change.

Given the geographical distance to both the seat of government and the epicentres of struggle during 2000–2005,[255] the moderate nature of working-class political subjectivities is hardly surprising. However, it does impact the relationships of different urban social organisations with the state and subsequently the ways in which the urban working-classes of Santa Cruz have experienced the *proceso de cambio*. Many working-class people in Santa Cruz did support Morales and the MAS when they came to power, identifying with a government that came from and represented the poor. Enrique Gonzalo Alba explains:

> We were all blue, we were all *masistas*, it was prohibited to support another party [in the 19 association of the Rotonda]. Why?

[253] Ernesto Urzagasti Saldías, architect and urban planner, Private University of Santa Cruz, interview, Santa Cruz, 08/04/2017.
[254] Anon, neighbour, Plan 3000, interview, Plan 3000, 02/02/2017
[255] The cities of Cochabamba, El Alto and La Paz, as well as rural Cochabamba (the Chapare) and La Paz. See chapter 4.

> Because we chose the people, the poorest families. And in their moment, MAS emerged from the poorest families. Evo, like me, is from Oruro, he is from my people/village [*mi pueblo*]. All of the *gremiales* were *masistas*, we always respected and admired president Evo.[256]

Fellow *gremio dirigente* Daniel Suárez, one of the longest standing leaders in the Rotonda and one of the most heavily involved in constructing the new market, echoed Gonzalo Alba's sentiments:

> We have always been strong and everyone was MAS. Everyone identified with the president Evo Morales and because of this, it was said that Plan 3000 was a bastion of the MAS.[257]

However, as mentioned above, the support for the government in Plan 3000 has ebbed away over Morales' time in office, with residents and leaders alike feeling ignored and excluded from government projects and the *proceso de cambio*. I argue that, because of the moderate political horizons and actions here, there has not been a moment of catharsis. This has not only reduced the need to co-opt individual leaders into the state administration, it has also denied the *cruceño* social organisations political inclusion through the informal contestatory interest intermediation regime used by the government to incorporate other, more radical sectors. Thus, the second incorporation, which Rossi (2018) contends characterises the Pink Tide, never reached Santa Cruz. If Morales' first ministerial cabinet, as table 4.4 demonstrates, contained no less than 10 ministers from social organisations, it should come as no surprise that none of those social organisation leaders came from Santa Cruz. Those from the wider department were only integrated into the party apparatus after the forced division of CIDOB into pro-government and anti-government factions (see McNelly 2017, Webber 2015)—the clearest case being pro-MAS CIDOB leaders in high positions of the Fondo Indígena (Indigenous Fund) (see Ayo 2016, Morales 2015)—and even then no urban organisations from Santa Cruz found representation.

This exclusion has been keenly felt by leaders in Plan 3000, who feel betrayed and ignored by a government that promised so much. Daniel Suárez continues:

> Unfortunately, there are times when power corrupts [*el poder emborracha*]. Power makes those that carried Evo to power

[256] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 04/04/2017.
[257] Daniel Suárez, 06/04/2017.

> disappear in the eyes of the government. For example, before one could meet with Evo or one of his ministers but now it is very difficult, the people who brought Evo to power, they wait.[258]

Suárez underscores the invisibility of the people of Plan 3000 in the eyes of the government, and the difficulty local leaders have in meeting with Morales or his ministers, implying a significant deterioration of the relationship between local MAS-affiliated organisations in Santa Cruz and the central government. Gonzalo Alba, also highlights the feeling of being forgotten, and how the MAS have appeared to actively prevent a new generation of leaders from emerging:

> The leaders who have been criticised [*se rajan*] for supporting the party and Evo, how have they been paid back? It seems like Evo has abandoned society, those that supported the MAS have been forgotten. It is not the same struggle as before, when the government fought for the poor… There is not a new generation of leaders and if there is, they fall into what is now the *proceso de cambio* and they are shut down. The MAS do not encourage new leaders to emerge, only they can be leaders. The people have started to realise this, and because of this, in the next elections [in 2019] the MAS are not going to win, there is no point in continuing to support them. We thought that they were going to be a government of the poor, but now that does not seem so. Although they have a pro-poor discourse, in practice this is not the case.[259]

For Suárez and Gonzalo Alba, the MAS government have done little for the poor of Plan 3000, who have been abandoned by Evo over the course of his presidency. Moreover, opportunities to renew the *proceso de cambio* are continually blocked as those currently in positions of power within the party prevent the emergence of new leaders. This was a common sentiment shared by current and former MAS supporters across the country, but it was felt more acutely in Plan 3000 where the obvious lack of support and attention from the government had led almost the entire community to turn its back on the MAS.

In short, whilst the government has built superficial corporatist relationships with social organisations in Santa Cruz (mainly through the construction of union offices), these organisations have remained outside spaces of influence and have been unable

[258] Daniel Suárez, 06/04/2017.
[259] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 04/04/2017.

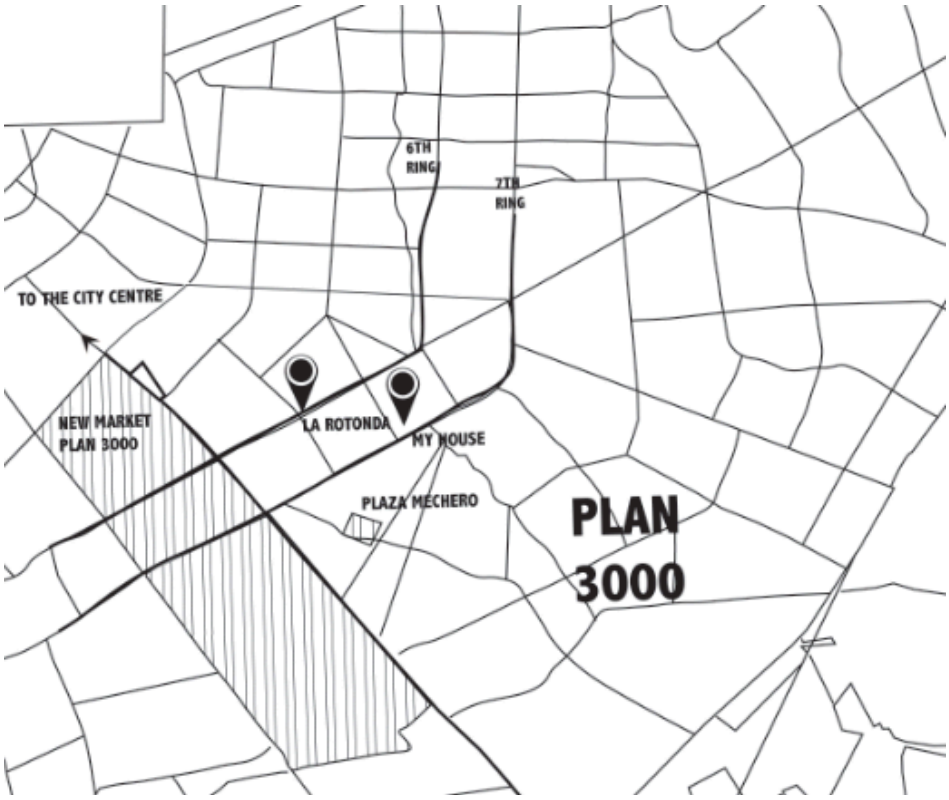
to have their voices heard. I have to stress here that as the last chapter demonstrated, having your voices heard by no means converts automatically into policy responses or government action, but it does lead to a different relationship with the state and a different perspective regarding who the agent for political change should be. On the one hand, there have been (putting it crudely) two responses from pro- and anti-government supporters after the co-optation of social organisations in El Alto, both of which are political: either lobby the government as it becomes the only possible agent of change, or mount political action protesting against co-optation by the state. On the other hand, in Santa Cruz social organisations—which historically have never been closely allied with the central government—have concentrated on pragmatic routes towards social change. In the remaining part of the chapter I am going to examine the example of the attempts by the 19 associations of the Rotonda to move their market and place these attempts within this field of possible political actions.

Moving the Market of the Rotonda: Pragmatic Working-Class Politics

On 11 December 2017 approximately 1,500 vendors from the market stalls surrounding the Rotonda, along with invited dignitaries Mayor Percy Fernández and president of the municipal council Angélica Sosa, inaugurated the new Mercado Modélo Plan 3000 (Model Market Plan 3000) (El Deber 2017a). This represented a massive coup for the vendors of the Rotonda and their 19 associations. Although anecdotal, hundreds of online customer reviews have lauded the newly found order, cleanliness, security and tranquility that the new space of the Mercado Modélo brings compared to the old market of the Rotonda. The brief newspaper articles and matter-of-fact presentation of this transition in the local press did not adequately capture the complexity of this drawn out process and what it meant to the local merchants accommodating themselves in their new home. Most of the vendors in the new market are small-scale retailers who purchase their wares from wholesalers (the emergent petty and actual bourgeoisie of the popular economy) usually based at the more central commercial centre of Barrio Lindo. The market vendors of the Rotonda operate in conditions of precarity and uncertainty that characterises hidden wage-labour. The moving of the market was the culmination of thirteen years of struggle, of working-class hopes and dreams perpetually dashed and born again, the continual attempts to build alliances that, over time, inevitably broke down.

I argue that the moving of the market of Plan 3000 from the Rotonda to the Mercado Modélo Plan 3000 offers a lens through which the quotidian working-class experiences of dynamics of the *proceso de cambio* can be elucidated in Santa Cruz. The construction of the new market was a complex process that contained multiple relationships with different levels of the state which were constantly in flux. It highlights how in the *cruceño* context absent of catharsis, political struggles have concentrated on pragmatic political strategy linked to improving 'economic' factors to achieve political goals. The struggles of vendors outlined below are shaped by the adverse position of the working-classes in Santa Cruz vis-à-vis capital, something that is reflected in how the precarity and informality of most market vendors are not seen as objects of struggle but rather as indisputable and unchangeable features of the reality of working-class people here. In other words, the class configuration and working-class experiences in Santa Cruz have limited the scope of class struggle from below.

Figure 7.4: Map of the Markets of Plan 3000



Source: Alejandra Rocabado

During the first stage of the construction of the market (2004–2007) the market guilds of Plan 3000 struck a deal with the municipal government, who donated six

hectares of land to the north-west of the Rotonda on Avenue San Aurelio to the market vendors' association so they could build the market (El Deber 2017b). The donation of this land was hard-won and the vendors of the Rotonda had a protracted battle with local state officials and neoliberal government ministers to grant them space for the new market.[260] This accord was finalised and formalised into a thirty-year lease in September 2007 (Vaca Añez 2016, 233).

The market guilds initially signed a US$4 million contract with the construction firm ETIA. However, this contract was cancelled in 2007 following the inadequate progress of the project and ETIA's inability to produce building plans that could be approved by the Secretaría Municipal de Planifiación (Municipal Planning Secretary, SEMPLA). There was briefly an agreement with the company ROIDEL, but when they proved unable to overcome the problems experienced by ETIA, a new deal was signed with Colombian transnational company Urbanizamos SRL worth US$6.7 million (Patria Insurgente 2012).[261] This marked the second phase of construction, with the involvement of the Ministry of Productive Development and reported government financing through the Evo Cumple project, with additional funding of US$3.5 million from the Venezuelan Banco de Desarollo Social (Social Development Bank, BANDES) (El Día 2012).

However, by 2010 construction work had ground to a halt at 75 percent completion amongst accusations of mismanagement by the supervisor of the project, Edgar Montaño Rojas (Página Siete 2017b). Amidst the frustration of locals political denouncements were made in the local press against *gremial* leaders in charge of overseeing construction. The delays were blamed on the deviant practices of three local leaders accused of corruption by another local leader. This phase of the project was marked by suspicion and confusion. The plans drawn up by the architects and engineers were found to be structurally unsound, and many of the pillars already constructed had to be rebuilt. The construction work itself was often shoddy and local leaders turned on one another. In the midst of this confusion it remains unclear what happened to the government funding from either the Bolivian central government or from the Venezuelan government. Indeed, Enrique Gonzalo Alba, current leader of

[260] Initially the vendors wanted to transform Plaza Merchero, about one and a half kilometres south-east of the Rotonda. However, they had to settle for a plot next to the Cañaveral (sugarcane plantation). Daniel Suárez, 06/04/2017.
[261] Juan Escalera, 30/01/2017.

the 19 associations adamantly states that there is no Evo Cumple money anymore, as it was returned almost immediately, and that the focus on these funds is a tale told by those with vested interests in the market project. According to Gonzalo Alba, local oppositional leaders want to stymie the construction of the market; the central government wants ownership of the market, something that would give them *de facto* power over an important sector of the *cruceño* urban working-classes in the city's largest district (some 300,000 people in total); and the political opposition of the MAS want to underscore the ties between government investment and the difficulties in constructing the market in order to be able to hold up the Mercado Modélo Plan 3000 as a political weapon that could be wielded against Morales in the future.[262] In other words, the 19 associations of the Rotonda and their construction project were often subject to multiple opposing external political forces, the majority of which have little to do with the new market itself.

This makes the market project a good place to examine the messy and contradictory nature of the *proceso de cambio* in Santa Cruz. It also makes it difficult to make assertions about exactly what happened during the construction of the new market. For example, I still have no idea whether there was ever any Evo Cumple money in the first place, if there was whether it was returned, or whether, in fact, a small group of old leaders pocketed the funds. Even without access to these particularities of the case, however, we can examine how the dynamics of the overall construction project have unfolded, where the points of conflict have been and how production relations have shaped these processes.

Class Interests, the Fragmented State Form and the New Market

Given the importance of the popular economy in the city of Santa Cruz, it is not surprising that both the municipal government and the central government have attempted to influence the construction and moving of the market in Plan 3000. As alluded to above, both the municipal government, owners of the land upon which the market is built, and the central government through the input of the Ministry of Productive Development (and potentially Evo Cumple money), attempted to influence the project for their benefit. This has led to a conflict of interests as different state

[262] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 04/04/2017.

actors vie to protect their concerns. As Christian Zeballos, president of one of the associations of the Rotonda put it:

> As you can see we have a market and we want to move there but we do not have some basic things… the central government has erected many barriers, the municipal government has also put up numerous obstacles.[263]

This interference was a source of much frustration for the leaders of the 19 associations, who feel that they were caught in the crossfire of relations between different state actors. The tensions with and between different layers of the state have consistently changed over the Morales years, influenced not only by local relationships and concerns but also by the broader dynamics of national politics. In the first stage of the project (2004–2007) there were growing tensions between different social groups in Bolivian society but the 19 associations of the Rotonda were largely unaffected by these dynamics, as was the relationship between the municipal government and central government. However, when the autonomy movement ramped up and the tensions between the new Morales central government and the departmental authorities of the media luna (including Santa Cruz) intensified, the municipal government and the central government found themselves at loggerheads. In this context the 19 associations found themselves in the centre of a power struggle between different levels of the state, with the MAS central government providing support and possibly Evo Cumple funds whilst, at the same time, the local government donated municipal land.

Quarrels with the state over the market did not disappear after the warming of relations between Santa Cruz and the MAS in 2010. On the contrary, tensions entered a new phase when the Ministry of Productive Development brokered a deal with the municipal government designed to re-appropriate the market for the local authority's benefit, as Gonzalo Alba explains:

> They struck a deal, the Ministry for Productive Development and the Municipal government of Santa Cruz. They tried to transfer the market from our ownership to the municipality's.[264]

[263] Christian Zeballos, President, Asociación Flor de Mayo la Única, interview, Plan 3000, 02/02/2017.
[264] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 04/04/2017.

The end of the high tensions of the previous period saw the 19 associations move from being in the crossfire of conflict between different layers of the state to outright opposition to multiple layers of the state. The attempt to appropriate the new Mercado Modélo de Plan 3000 was halted only through legal challenges mounted by the 19 associations in the juridical capital of Sucre.[265]

In the latest configuration of relations with the state, the 19 associations, as discussed above, have broken ties with the MAS central government and their interests have subsequently aligned with the municipal government. In September 2015, the local government of Percy Fernández laid out its integrated municipal policy for catering and services of Santa Cruz in Law 136, a manoeuvre which started the arduous process of moving the markets inside the first ring to newly constructed municipal markets on ring-roads and central arteries further outside the city centre (Consejo Municipal de Santa Cruz 2015). Although this policy targeted the more central markets, including the Mercado Abasto, Los Pozos and La Ramada, Law 136 provided the legal framework for the market vendors of the Rotonda to use to demand the municipal government fulfil its promises. The 19 associations of the Rotonda, which represent the hidden wage labourers who work in the market, have been able to use Law 136—particularly articles 5 and 6—to demand that the government paves the roads around their market and lays the necessary water and electricity infrastructure for the market to function properly.

For their part, the municipal government is happy to comply as it is more concerned with breaking the resistance of market vendors at the other, more centrality located markets who are reluctant to move. Other wholesale vendors in these markets are linked into regional and national distribution networks and are concerned not with their livelihood strategies but how to accumulate capital. Gonzalo Alba contends that the capitalist compulsion to accumulate is making these vendors resistant to moving:

> [The other market vendors] complain, the shops like *Chelse* [in La Ramanda] that earn perhaps US$9 million annually. These same people have their big shops, their stalls in the main commercial streets that they rent out. It seems that most of the small vendors [who rent these stalls] will move if the market does. However, they have to move the big investors from there… but they do not want to. They are thinking “if we leave, who is going to come and buy

[265] Daniel Suárez, 06/04/2017.

> from us now, what are we going to do?" Because of this they do not want to move'.[266]

Gonzalo Alba stresses the capitalist nature of the vendors who oppose the move not only by underscoring their annual earnings, but also by repeating the size of their ventures compared to everyone else: big shops, big investors versus the 'small vendors [who] will move if the market does'. Indeed, the argument that these vendors use for not moving is a straightforward defence of private property in front of the apparent encroachment of the state, as the words of Patrocinio Bonilla, leader of the vendors at Mercado Abasto, reveals:

> The politicians of the municipal government have their own mission, objectives, of obtaining [and maintaining] power. In contrast, the administrators here work for the good of our associates… we are a private market and should be a private market. But the new markets are semi-private.[267]

It appears, then, that the class interests of the groups represented by different market associations shapes their attitude towards the local government. As such, leaders from Plan 3000 are grateful to the administration of Santa Cruz mayor Percy Fernández for his support in moving the market—something they attribute to the influence of ex-*gremial* leader and member of city council Jesús Cahuana—as it will offer more security and help mediate some of the precarity and uncertainty of the hidden wage labour of the small-scale vendors of the Rotonda. They have even gone as far as to march against other sectors of market guilds in the city—who are linked into broader supply networks and are more interested in the dynamics of capital accumulation and oppose the law—to ensure the law's promulgation.[268]

Class interests continue to shape relationships with the municipal government since the moving of the market in December 2017. Although the 19 associations represent vendors drawn from the informalised working-classes of the popular economy, the working-classes here are themselves stratified. Whilst the market vendors at least have the security a fixed space in the market represents, ambulant traders who sell their wares in the street experience even more precarity and uncertainty. This group has tried to take advantage the moving of the market to

[266] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 04/04/2017.
[267] Patrocinio Bonilla, President, Asociación 21 de Julio del Mercado Abasto, interview, Santa Cruz, 13/03/2017.
[268] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 04/04/2017.

establish better commercial spots for themselves. The vacated space left unused by the vendors of the 19 associations around the roundabout has been occupied by *ambulantes*, who have slowed down the paving of the avenues around the old location of the Rotonda market (Ruiz 2018). The 19 associations have been in continual dialogue with the municipal government, marching in March 2018 to guarantee an effective response from local authorities in preventing the *ambulantes* from establishing themselves as rival merchants (El Deber 2018a). The re-occupation of the old market of the Rotonda was one of the principal concerns of *gremio* leaders, who were determined to have a coordinated plan with the local government and the transport unions to ensure that the new market was well served and became the new centre of commercial and social life in Plan 3000.[269] Thus far it has proved difficult to complete all of the new infrastructure projects and prevent new stalls cropping up on the street curbs around the Rotonda (El Deber 2018b), however the prolonged efforts in this direction demonstrate the continuation of coordination and cooperation between the municipal government and the 19 associations. In this sense, I argue that, deprived of informal contestation as a mechanism of inclusion, the 19 associations of the Rotonda have attempted to force a type of state managerialism from below, with some incorporation into the state through technocratic responses to public policy suggestions better than nothing.

Why Move the Market? Political Dreams of Local Leadership

There are a number of reasons why the market vendors wanted to move their market. Firstly, the Rotonda was a known crime hotspot, with vendors and their customers suffering the maladies of insecurity. The middle of the roundabout was permanently occupied by groups of *cleferos*—glue-sniffers—and the narrow, poorly lit alleyways that comprise the market and sprout off from the central thoroughfares bred opportunities for petty crime. On my first visit to Plan 3000 I saw a group of teenagers hand over a bloody and battered youth to the Police, evidently caught red-handed in the midst of some criminal act or other. Day two at the Rotonda was punctuated by a man being robbed at knifepoint in broad daylight some five feet from me. If the accounts of crime in Plan 3000 are exaggerated (which they undoubtedly are), that is

[269] Daniel Suárez, 06/04/2017.

not to say petty theft and more serious violent crimes linked to youth gangs are not a problem here—they most definitely are—hence the vendors wanting to move to a more secure location. Secondly, the market of the Rotonda was known for dirt, the stench of rubbish and—as Nancy Postero's (2007) vivid description of the Rotonda suggests—filthy, stagnant water that accumulates on the Rotonda's streets and laps gently at the makeshift barricades of the market vendors here whenever it rains.

Figure 7.5: La Rotonda, Plan 3000, After Heavy Rainfall

Source: Author's Photo

The new market has offered sanctuary for more established vendors from the disorder that characterised the Rotonda, providing a clean, dry, well lit and secure space within which to do business, whilst leaving the *ambulantes* out in the cold, toiling against the harsh reality of street-vending.

However, some of the leadership who have been heavily involved in the project, have grander ambitions. Enrique Gonzalo Alba sees the market as the first step in the political transformation of Plan 3000:

> To change the quality of life is the dream. It is no longer a fight between leaders, between associations, but a *social struggle* to change the lives of many market vendors in this zone in the south of Santa Cruz. At times we are labelled second-class citizens so the municipality treats us accordingly. But we are going to rise up,

> and that is what's happening. We want to be a part of the politics, the vision of the city. We want to contribute to the politics of a clean, ordered Santa Cruz and be one of the cleanest, most sanitary markets in the city.[270]

For Gonzalo Alba, the construction of the market surpasses the immediacy of the project and becomes a political project to create a new, better society within the city of Santa Cruz. These are indeed admirable goals, and Gonzalo Alba sees the moving of the market as the first stage in a political project that would transform the entire neighbourhood:

> The first step in this struggle for Plan 3000 is that of moving the market… the second phase is the consolidation of Plan 3000 as the [sixth] municipal section of the city. We already have almost all of the institutions that we need, we have the sub-mayoral office, gas ducts, schools, the polytechnic is almost finished, the market will greatly improve the area. We have good infrastructure, the only thing we will lack is an industrial park, we basically have all of the conditions needed to become a separate municipality.[271]

Gonzalo Alba's comments reveal the scope of his ambitions. Firstly, he wants Plan 3000 to follow in El Alto's footsteps and become a separate municipality from the city of Santa Cruz, a move that would give the neighbourhood fiscal autonomy and great political power. Secondly, Gonzalo Alba dreams of an industrial park in Plan 3000, transforming the Plan from a commercial centre lacking productive activities to an integral part of the 'productive', 'modern' metropolitan conurbation of Santa Cruz. Whilst there is some support from residents for municipal autonomy, it remains relatively marginal and did not (to my knowledge) mobilise any serious social struggles within Plan 3000. The same could be said of the industrial park, which has been suggested but had, as of 2018, failed to materialise in any concrete way.

In the context of a demobilised social base discussed in more detail below, these comments can be understood as a case of the leadership of Enrique Gonzalo Alba attempting to compensate for the lack of rank-and-file political action with top-down initiatives that have emerged from, and are led by, the *gremio* leaders. The 19 associations of the Rotonda have often entered into pragmatic agreements with local

[270] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 04/04/2017.
[271] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 04/04/2017.

politicians in this context in order to complete the market, fostering incorporation into the state through state managerialism. It appears that the industrial park proposal would entail entering into further pragmatic coalitions, not only with the local state but with fractions of capital operating in Santa Cruz.

The Difficulty of Mobilising the Rank-and-File and the Political Maneouvring of Leaders

The meetings I attended and my conversations with market vendors of the Rotonda underscored some of the difficulties in political organising in the city of Santa Cruz. The leaders who were active in organising the market attempted to be open, honest and transparent about their actions and those of their associations. For example, when a decision was needed regarding which company to choose to pave the car park outside the market, the leadership called an *ampliado* attended by over a thousand associates. The proposals of six construction firms were read out and then a vote was taken. Objections were listened to and debated until a consensus between the attendees was reached. This being said, apart from this one large meeting, rank-and-file organising appeared very difficult. Many vendors worked long hours most days of the week and so could not attend regular meetings. Most market vendors are women and so have childcare responsibilities and have to perform other social reproductive tasks for the rest of the family.

This meant that participation was an issue at every the level within the 19 associations, from the upper echelons of leadership down to the rank-and-file. At the several meetings I went to only a handful of associations ever had more than half their directory of six leaders present, with most only represented by the president.[272] Dissemination of key information also seemed to be an issue, with some leaders complaining that some associations were keeping their membership in the dark over certain matters. This was partly because of the conflict between different leaders—some of whom were against the construction of the market—who intentionally did not inform their associates about developments of the new market and partly because of a general lack of leadership capacity. Daniel Suárez expresses frustration at both the lack of leadership and rank-and-file activity in some of the 19 association of the Rotonda:

[272] Author's field notes.

> As an association we try to comply with all the requirements, unlike other associations. Not all associations comply with our internal regulations, which is a massive problem. More than anything, we are lacking capacitation, leadership and the "organic part"[273]… There are many leaders who, in one way or another, do not know their specific function as a leader. The leader is there to orientate her bases, to demonstrate something positive to the associates. For their part, the associates approve decisions and so leaders have to comply with what the associates say.[274]

This situation, given the general context of working-class politics outlined above, is unsurprising. It does, however, have political ramifications that impact especially the ways in which social organisations are internally organised and the relationship between the leadership and its bases. In a context where the general passivity of the working-classes is palpable, there can be a tendency for the leadership to begin to exhibit relative autonomy from the opinions and actions of their working-class bases.

This offers an entry point into understanding the confusing and contradictory positions of different groups within the leadership. At times it seems like certain groups of leaders within the 19 associations were at war with one another, as the following ethnographic vignettes from meetings between leaders, on what was then the building site of the new market, reveal. Part of the reason the construction project was so delayed was thanks to a small group of affiliates working against the majority of the *gremios*. They brought the press to the building site, pointing out errors and deficiencies in the building work to photograph, and started legal procedures against certain affiliates, slowing down the process to get plans through the Society of Engineers. In February 2017, the 19 associations were having problems with certain parts of the construction site flooding, apparently because pipes were unable to cope with the force of the water flowing through them. Before one of the meetings I attended during this time, some of the leaders found a piece of pipe that had been shattered, supposedly by the flow of water. However, the pipes had been broken in such a way—with a sharp jagged edge—that suggested it could have only been done by a forceful blow. People's suspicions were further raised by one of the opponents of the construction of the market arriving the day after the pipes were broken with her lawyers

[273] The reference to the 'organic part' is linked to the union tradition in Bolivia and refers, simply, to the amount of activity and input of the rank-and-file in an organisation.
[274] Daniel Suárez, 06/04/2017.

to take photos of the broken pipes and examine the 'shoddy craftsmanship'. It is unclear whether all of the pipes were broken by water or by the oppositional group. Nevertheless, there was a enough evidence to suggest a certain amount of foul play.

This, understandably, frustrated the leadership and was but the latest setback to the market project. This exasperation came to a head at another of the meetings I attended in February 2017. Everybody knew who was against the construction project, and their associations were reprimanded for not having done enough internally to 'cleanse themselves' [*limpio interno*] of the threat they pose. When the miscellaneous section of the meeting was finally reached, a letter was delivered from an associate [*socio*] of a divided association denouncing two leaders who were present, releasing a wave of pent up anger and violence. He spoke passionately about their betrayal and the crowd became tense—throughout the meeting people repeatedly made reference to the 'opposition within our midst'. After he spoke the man sitting beside me, one of the accused oppositional leaders, stood up and attempted to mount a rebuttal, but the damage was done. He was surrounded by angry, frustrated female leaders who repeatedly hit him over the head with empty plastic bottles. Cowering, he could hardly get a word in edgewise, and the women started pushing him from all sides shouting '*¡fuera, fuera!* [Out, out!]' until, finally, he and his companion left.

The explosive nature of this episode left a marked impression on me and was one of the reasons I decided to write about the new Mercado Modélo de Plan 3000. This moment revealed what this project meant to some people, the time and effort they had invested over the years as well as their anxieties regarding its completion, the overall precarity of the whole situation and the different political forces in play. I could not get completely to the bottom of why different leaders opposed the project, although some leaders gave different theories. Juan Escalera was disgruntled about the ownership of the land by the municipal government and wanted the 19 associations to buy the land outright, although this explanation does not touch upon why one would work against the construction process.[275] Both Daniel Suárez and Enrique Gonzalo Alba implied that it was due to battles for power between the 19 associations, with some using the act of reporting problems as a way to build up a working relationship with the municipal government, which also seems plausible.[276]

[275] Juan Escalera, 30/01/2017.
[276] Enrique Gonzalo Alba, 06/04/2017.

The manipulation of the construction process also could have been used as a political chip in an attempt to gain more power within the 19 associations by formerly sidelined leaders. The prospect of municipal funding obtainable through Law 136 for beginning construction anew or furthering central government funding from the MAS also possibly explains why some were working against the construction process, as does the (possible) involvement of construction firms owned by *gremio* leaders.[277] In other words, it is likely that there was a small group of leaders who could pursue their personal economic or political ambitions through the sabotage of the construction of the market. The general lack of political engagement from the rank-and-file of the associations make these scenarios possible, underlining the consequences of a politically inactive working-class base in Santa Cruz.

These vignettes also serve to highlight the frustration of the working-class people involved, of those leaders who had been working towards the goal of constructing the market. They bring to light the time and effort they have poured into this project, the emotional and financial resources that must have been expended throughout the thirteen years. It brings colour to the otherwise lifeless accounts of the new market offered by the local press, who transform thirteen years of struggle, contestation, alliances, heartache and despair, hope, dreams and blood, sweat and tears—in other words thirteen years of the intertwined lives of those that live and work in the Rotonda—into the banalities of a singular event: an opening ceremony. This was a period when feelings of hope and despair mixed together. The spirits of the occupants of the Rotonda were constantly rising or falling as the hope of leaving the Rotonda—with its waterlogged streets, foul stench, high crime and risk of fire[278]—was dampened by constant delays and difficulties. It also reflects the frustration of attempting to finish a project in a situation where the bulk of the work falls on the shoulders of a small group; the rank-and-file, although seemingly appreciative, is politically inactive; and where a small group of leaders have tried to use their autonomy from their bases for their own political gains.

[277] I did not see any evidence of this in Santa Cruz but it was rumoured that some FEJUVE-El Alto leaders made serious money through diverting state-funds into contracts given to construction firms they owned. It is therefore a possible explanation for some leaders being against the project and would further suggest internal stratification between petty bourgeois and working-class vendors. However, despite signs of differentiation between vendors, the evidence I found suggests this hypothesis is unlikely.

[278] A section of the Rotonda market burnt down in August 2017 after I had returned from fieldwork (Landívar et al. 2017).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have tried to map out the different experiences of the working-classes under the MAS government. It sheds light onto the difficulties of left-wing governments in power and of more invisible working-class groups under progressive regimes. The *proceso de cambio* has unevenly targeted different social groups and geographical areas, leaving some communities—particularly rural communities in the *altiplano*—satisfied with increased resources and state services; some communities—especially those in the path of infrastructure and extractive projects that continue to be the principle source of state revenue—at loggerheads with the state; and some groups relatively ignored by policy directives and changes. The working-classes of Santa Cruz find themselves in this latter group, forced to struggle to be seen by the MAS government and to mediate the continually adverse political economic conditions. The political strategies and goals under these conditions are different to those of the more visible groups, as is their relationship to the state itself. In such circumstances, local leaders turn to more pragmatic political alliances and actions in order to seek political incorporation through state managerialism, with technocratic, top down responses to the daily hardships faced by the working-classes preferable to nothing.

After sketching out the political economic terrain of the city of Santa Cruz, I explored moments of radicalism and working-class struggle here, concluding that working-class movements have never surpassed economic corporatism and moved into definite political action. Struggles have almost exclusively been defensive and motivated by the individual or collective interests of groups. This lack of political radicalism amongst the *cruceño* working-classes structured the immediate struggles they have undertaken. This class context, combined with the institutionalised corportist nature of relations between social organisations and multiple layers of the state, has limited the potential outcomes and horizons of working-class struggles. Whilst this has given some social organisations more autonomy, it has also tied others who have received token material support—most notably the labour movement—more strongly to their cause. These organisations have not enjoyed the political or material support received by other more radical social organisations and remain politically marginalised within the national politics pursued by the MAS.

In the case of the market vendors of Plan 3000, the lack of engagement of the MAS in Santa Cruz has led to a large-scale loss of electoral support. However, rather than groups turning to other political parties, the moving of the market shows how this shift has contributed to the continuation of a general political inactivity amongst the working-class rank-and-file, and how the social organisation leadership has turned to other, more pragmatic means, to achieve political goals. At the same time, this lack of rank-and-file action has allowed some leaders to promote or sabotage projects for their own political interests or construct relationships with the local political and economic elite. Even in the cases where the leadership are trying to transform society, they are obligated to do so within the confines of people's everyday routines and the technocratic responses of the state, leaving the fundamental pillars of society unchanged and unchallenged and forcing leaders to try and replace the radical action of the rank-and-file.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have sought to explore working-class experiences of the government of Evo Morales in two Bolivian cities through the theoretical frame of a passive revolution. The central contention of the thesis is that the particular configuration of the working-classes, their historical experiences of class struggle, the production of urban space and uneven state formation has impacted the relation between different groups and the state, shaping their experiences of the second incorporation of popular sectors under Morales' government during this period. On the one hand, in the city of El Alto, strong social movements that brought down two national governments were co-opted by Morales' governments and integrated into the state through processes of transformism, pacifying their radical potential despite no significant material change to the city's class structure. Transformism has, however, proved unable to completely appease the *alteño* working-classes, who demonstrate awareness of the government's limitations and the processes of co-optation themselves, indicating that passive revolution is never fully complete. On the other hand, in the city of Santa Cruz, the spatial production of the city, its emergence as an economic hub and its particular class structure have produced adverse conditions for working-class organisations. In the absence of rank-and-file participation in social organisations, local leaders have turned to building pragmatic alliances with local elites and the state in order to achieve modest local material gains, fostering political incorporation through what Eduardo Silva (2018) has termed 'state managerialism'. Whereas a once highly-mobilised, independent working class was absorbed and disarticulated by the state in El Alto, in Santa Cruz, pragmatic, vertical, and clientelistic working class relations with the state under Morales showed considerable continuity compared to earlier historical periods, precisely because the working class of Santa Cruz had never been as well organised nor capable of independent mobilisation from below.

The goal of this concluding chapter is to revisit my theoretical alterations to passive revolution in light of the arguments advanced in the subsequent six chapters. In the first, theoretical chapter I argued that mainstream social movement theory and political ethnography, despite some useful insights and, in the case of the latter, methodological advancements, are inappropriate lenses through which to view the Pink Tide government of Evo Morales due to the absence of historical and political economic considerations of class and capital accumulation. Drawing on Claudio Katz

(2015b), I sketched the progressive cycle through five overlapping phases, at times marked by a diachronism between the underlying economic and political dynamics. This periodisation pointed to the need for a theoretical approach that included economic and political considerations as dialectically connected but not reducible to one another. I argued that Antonio Gramsci's historical approach of 'passive revolution' provides an excellent framework for understanding the progressive cycle, albeit with some modifications of my own. To understand the particular historical form of 'transformism' in the Pink Tide, I introduced Silva's concept of segmented popular interest intermediation regimes. And as a way to counter a tendency towards state-centricity present in some uses of passive revolution, I introduced three theoretical pivots—class, space and state—to better unpick the recent dynamics of Latin America.

The rest of the chapter advances in such a way as to explore these theoretical adjustments through the broader historical dynamics of the rise and government of Evo Morales as well as through my two case studies, the cities of El Alto and Santa Cruz. The next section addresses transformism, segmented popular interest intermediation regimes and the second incorporation. Secondly, I explore how the three heuristic devices of the state effect, state affect and the profane-sublime dialectic helped me better explain the dynamics of state formation present in passive revolution. Thirdly, I examine how viewing passive revolution as a spatial schema adds a layer of complexity to my analysis. Lastly, I look at how class considerations are vital to how passive revolution unfolded in Bolivia and how different fractions of the working-classes experienced these processes in a variegated manner.

Transformism, Segmented Popular Interest Intermediation Regimes and the Second Incorporation

My first alteration to passive revolution was to develop its second phase, transformism, using Federico Rossi's (2018) notion of the second incorporation. For Rossi and Silva (2018, 9), the second incorporation of popular sectors after twenty years of neoliberal reforms and governments in Latin America differed from the more homogenous first incorporation of the working-classes through trade unions, and was marked by the diversity of the popular sectors that had emerged from the fragmented trade unions during the 1990s. As discussed in chapter 1, during the period of the National

Revolutionary State (1952–1985) popular forces were vital political actors, with social struggles from below shaping the dialectical production of space, the state and class. The content of these popular forces developed throughout the second half of the twentieth century, with the miners, central actors of the 1952 state, being joined by a resurgent indigenous radicalism expressed through *katarismo* and the formation of the CSUTCB. However, chapter 3 showed the deregulation of finance and the labour market during neoliberalism (1985–2005), along with privatisation and large scale public sector layoffs, galvanised intense processes of class decomposition as the miners were relocated from the old mining centres to the growing conurbations of Cochabamba, El Alto and Santa Cruz and the coca growing region of the Chapare. This weakened the labour movement and stripped the miners of the political and economic importance they enjoyed under the National Revolutionary State. Chapter 3 also demonstrated how the burgeoning working-classes were forced into increasingly informalised and precarious forms of wage labour (more often than not disguised by family ties or self-exploitation to survive). For Rossi and Silva (2018, 8), this was a period of disincorporation, which was never absolute, and was a period where the ethnic-cultural cleavage was politicised by the growing lowland indigenous movements and the *cocaleros* inside the CSUTCB, led by Evo Morales (Tapia 2011). This, coupled with the unintended consequences of neoliberal decentralisation in forming strong, urban neighbourhood councils, created a heterogeneous popular sector in Bolivia.

The second incorporation was the political inclusion of these popular sectors in the left-wing government of Evo Morales. There were, I contend, three overlapping dynamics to co-option. Firstly, the MAS government explicitly assimilated social organisation leaders into the state by offering them official posts, as well as implicitly integrating leaders through new networks of clientelism. Secondly, the MAS created parallel 'official' umbrella organisations, undermining independent, transformative political action by social organisations. Thirdly, looking at these processes from below, there was a clear susceptibility of leaders, causes and tactics *to be* co-opted into the state. Combined, these three dimensions of co-option of social movements by the MAS curtailed the radicalism that accumulated during the revolutionary cycle (2000–2005).

However, because of the possibility of progressive outcomes to the 'revolution-restoration' dialectic, this was about more than simple state corporatism. The second

incorporation was also about the 'recognition and incorporation of popular and poor subaltern social groups' interests in the political arena, which comprises political parties, elections, executive and legislative institutions, and policy making' (Rossi and Silva 2018, 10). In chapter 5, I argued that one of the reasons social movements shifted from offensive positions pushing for change to defensive positions in defence of the government was the ostensible fulfilment of popular sector demands for a Constituent Assembly (AC) and the nationalisation of hydrocarbons through technocratic mechanism led by the government. Whilst the AC was attended by many popular sector actors, they were forced to align with the MAS political party, and their demands were transformed into technocratic proposals negotiated with the opposition by Vice-President Álvaro García Linera. The nationalisation of gas amounted to the renegotiation of gas contracts with transnational operators, a major win for the MAS but not the nationalisation demanded by popular sectors during the two Gas Wars. Silva calls this technocratic completion of social movement goals from above 'state managerialism', which provides a theoretical lens that captures the legitimisation of the state and alignment of radical social movements as the social base of the Morales government. As chapter 7 reveals, state managerialism, albeit in a different form, was also present in Santa Cruz as social organisation leaders, faced with an adverse political and political economic context, turned to building pragmatic alliances with local state actors and elites to achieve modest localised political goals.

The other dimension of segmented popular interest intermediation regimes is what Silva (2018, 313) labels 'informal contestatory' regimes. Although these were all but absent in Santa Cruz, they were a key dimension of state-society relations in El Alto and a central part to the discussion presented in chapter 6. The continual reference to 'the militants of the Gas War' by participants in the El Alto School of Political Formation (SPF) suggests informal contestation remains a central aspect of state-society relations here. The potential of the rebel city is still present here, hinting at the ways that social organisations here have been incorporated into the state through informal contestation interest intermediation regimes, with popular protest still used as a way to direct local and national public policy.

The dynamics of transformism always move beyond mere state corporatism or clientelism, what Gramsci (2011b, 257, Q8, §80) called molecular transformism. The second phase of transformism is a quantitative transformation as subaltern groups are pacified and absorbed into the political project through the dissemination of the ruling

ideology with a progressive veneer. Segmented popular interest intermediation regimes offer a useful theoretical tool to unpick how this pacification and absorption occurs and examine the incorporation mechanisms of diverse popular sectors used by the MAS.

State Formation in Passive Revolution

Passive revolution is used to frame the progressive cycle and the Pink Tide throughout the thesis, as it simultaneously offers a way to understand the shifting political economy of the region, as well as its class dynamics, processes of state formation and morphing state-society relations. I argue that the heuristic devices of the state effect, the state affect and the profane-sublime dialectic reveal how dynamics of state formation play out in moments of passive revolution. In chapter 3 I sketched out how the state was continually transformed under neoliberalism, shifting from a state-led economy to a market-led economy. Furthermore, the state's administrative responsibilities were decentralised, increasing the presence of the state in civil society and placing increased financial responsibilities onto local municipalities even as the democratic participation of the Bolivian population was severely limited.

The arrival of Morales to power initiated a transformation (albeit less radical than some sectors wished) of this neoliberal state form. In chapter 5 I demonstrated how the economic policy of the MAS laid out in the 2006 Plan Nacional de Desarrollo (National Development Plan, PND) (Bolivia 2006) has played an important part in concretising the state, with infrastructure investment and its accompanying propaganda conjuring the state in parts of the Bolivian territory and society where it was not present before, a dimension of state formation Mitchell (2006) called the 'state effect'. Infrastructure projects announced with state spectacles, and inexorably linked with the president himself through the government tagline 'Evo delivers, Bolivia changes', have been important in making the state and the gains from nationalisation of hydrocarbons appear in people's everyday lives. This occurred concurrently with an orientation of popular sectors towards the state as a cluster of promises. This endurance of the notion that the state was capable of resolving problems faced by subaltern working-class groups was visible in the question of the SPF participants in chapter 6 and the pragmatic alliances of the Rotonda market vendors fostered to aid the construction of their market in chapter 7.

These two dimensions of state formation, I argue, are enabled by a third: the sublime and profane nature of both the state and, importantly for the arguments that unfurled during the course of this thesis, Evo Morales himself. The PND discussed in chapter 5 divided the economy into profit-generating sectors and employment-generating sectors and policies, concentrating on fostering the former and transferring increased state revenues captured by the state into the latter, which has consolidated Bolivia's insertion into global markets as a producer of primary commodities and their low valued-added derivatives. I contend this has increasingly demarcated environmental bio-diverse zones of rainforest, home to the natural profane body of hydrocarbons, as expendable for the good of the sublime Bolivian nation, concurrently legitimising the state and galvanising socio-environmental conflicts in certain parts of the country.

I also examined how the government has used Evo Morales' concurrent sublimity and profanity to consolidate the state in chapter 5. On the one hand, the fact that Evo is 'of the people' makes him, and consequently the state, closer in proximity and more relatable to the working-classes. On the other hand, Evo's sublimity makes him virtually an apostle, not at fault for the government's errors. This has helped maintain the legitimacy of Morales and the state even as the contradictions of the economic programme of the MAS were starting to appear, following the end of the commodities boom in 2011. It has also led to a political impasse where new leaders and movements are unable to break onto the political scene, which is still dominated by politicians from the neoliberal era.

In El Alto, as discussed in chapter 6, the profanity and sublimity has partially contained the contradictions underpinning the MAS. The responses of SPF attendees to MAS policies and the ideologies underpinning the *proceso de cambio*, I argued, reveal criticisms of, and at times confusion at, the political strategy of the MAS and its political project, the *proceso de cambio*. Questions by *alteño* MAS activists were cutting and showed that this dialectic was incapable of fully pacifying social organisations. However, the profane-sublime dimensions of Morales proved successful at demobilising social organisations and co-opting local leadership, as participants struggled to conceive creative political action beyond Morales and his government (thus by extension the state).

As this discussion demonstrates, these three heuristic devices link the segmented popular interest intermediation regimes to broader processes of state

formation, and have allowed me to explore the historically specific ways transformism during the Pink Tide has affected state formation in Bolivia. As such, they draw analytical connection between diverse processes of industrialisation, the uses of indigeneity by the MAS and the presentation of Evo Morales as the ideal indigenous citizen, as well as the reception of these political dynamics by popular sectors. Although the MAS government policy has been successful at consolidating the liberal state form and extending it over Bolivian society, these processes have been contested and incomplete, in constant need of renewal in the face of challenges mounted from below.

Passive Revolution as a Spatial Schema

A focus on the spatial dimension of passive revolution complemented analysis of its mechanisms of state formation. Chapter 2 demonstrated how during the thirty-three-year period after the 1952 revolution, Bolivia articulated itself more effectively than ever as a nation, whilst at the same time processes of urbanisation drew indigenous peasants to the cities of La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz, leading to the formation of my two research sites, El Alto and Plan 3000. The economic axis shifted from La Paz—Oruro—Potosí to La Paz—Cochabamba—Santa Cruz during this period too. Neoliberal processes left deep scars in and transformed the textures of space beyond recognition, as discussed in chapter 3. Proletarianisation was accompanied by urbanisation as peasants came to Bolivian urban areas—particularly La Paz/El Alto, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz—in huge numbers. New migrants were met with a lack of available housing and were forced to build their own dwellings, collaborating with neighbours—often fellow migrants from the same community—to demand basic services from the state. This *autoconstrucción* equipped city-dwellers with the practical tools used in later struggles that exploded as the legitimacy of neoliberalism began to wane.

Space, I have argued, is an integral, if often forgotten, part of passive revolution, as passive revolution is a spatial resolution to political crises. Chapter 4 showed how the context of catharsis bifurcated Bolivia into the eastern lowlands and the western highlands. Splitting the country into ‘two Bolivias’ was initiated by Aymara nationalist Felipe Quispe, then furthered and intensified by the autonomist movement of the media luna. Although this divide has lessened since the Porvenir Massacre and the

Battle of Plan 3000 in September 2008, the *proceso de cambio* has targeted different social groups and geographical areas unevenly. It has left some communities—particularly rural communities in the *altiplano*—satisfied with increased resources and state services; some communities—especially those in the path of infrastructure and extractivist projects that continue to be the principle source of state revenue—at loggerheads with the state; and some groups relatively ignored by policy directives and changes. Through examining how a marginal group of workers in Plan 3000 (Santa Cruz) have experienced the Left in power, chapter 7 explores the political strategies and experiences of a social organisation in this latter, disregarded group. These organisations have not enjoyed the political or material support received by other more radical social organisations and remain politically marginalised within the national politics pursued by the MAS, forcing these organisations to develop more pragmatic relationships with different parts of the state and actively pursue practices aimed at incorporation via technocratic means through state managerialism.

This complements aspects of passive revolution and how it has been experienced in El Alto, outlined in chapter 6. I sought to demonstrate the effects of the unevenness of the political project on the MAS—and particularly the spatial inequality of the infrastructure and industrialisation projects of the NDP—on the experiences of *alteños*. Many of the participants complained about the 'forgotten' nature of El Alto and presented the cities of Santa Cruz and Cochabamba as the main benefactors of MAS government policy, a position that reflects the dynamics of the *proceso de cambio* in El Alto more than the reality of these other cities, which face many of similar problems. The forgotten city framing in the context of the militants of El Alto was a key way that participants presented demands for resources for the city as legitimate.

This spatial approach addresses the contention of geographers (e.g., Harvey 2012, Hesketh and Morton 2014) that space matters in the Pink Tide, and of the importance of tracing the historical trajectory of the production of space in Bolivia, as well as the political dynamics of social movements and the state. It allows a sophisticated reading of spatially diverse processes of state and class formation, and better shines a light on the variegated working-class experiences of a progressive government.

Class Formation in Times of Passive Revolution

As hinted at in the above discussions, class formation is a central aspect of passive revolution. The historically contingent outcomes of class struggle do, after all, help shape the form passive revolution assumes. I complemented my modified passive revolution frame with E.P. Thompson's experiential definition of class and class struggle, as well as political economic sketches of the class structure in each of my two case studies. During the 1970s, as chapter 2 showed, an agricultural bourgeoisie emerged in the eastern lowlands, linked to export-orientated agriculture and the growing cocaine industry, and a financial bourgeoisie in La Paz and Santa Cruz developed in the wake of a small commodity and construction boom during the *banzerato*. Tin mining declined in profitability and economic importance as the hydrocarbons sector and export-orientated agribusiness expanded. However, the economy overall remained one reliant on extractivism and Bolivia continued to be inserted into global markets as a primary commodity producer.

Chapter 3 analysed how neoliberalism shaped the class structure which forms the basis of the urban working-classes today. Droughts in the western *altiplano*, coupled with the increased competition from a liberalised agricultural sector together with little available credit, forced *campesinos* off their land and into the labour market, accompanied by women who also joined the increasing ranks of labour. Popular participation initiatives inadvertently created new spaces for radical change and new forms of class struggle that would further alter the historical trajectory of the country. Cross class alliances that started in the Water War of the year 2000 in Cochabamba were a central element of the social struggles 2000—2005. Chapter 4 traces how the territorically-based social organisation, the FEJUVE-El Alto, became the infrastructure of class struggle at the heart of October 2003. I mapped out the growing radicalism of *alteños* through the creation of the public university, UPEA, the *impuestazo* of February 2003 and the fights against the implementation of the municipal taxes *maya* and *paya*, arguing that in these moments *alteños* connected the deterioration of the quality of their everyday lives to the broader deleterious nature of neoliberalism. However, these struggles were still unorganised and needed a social organisation to coordinate struggles. The FEJUVE-El Alto provided this infrastructure, having been freed of clientelist relations with the death of Carlos Palenque in 1997 and the crisis of political parties in the city, assisted by a new generation of leaders formed through

struggles. The result of these interconnected processes, I argued, was an organisation that could sustain city-wide protests for over two weeks demanding the 'nationalisation of gas'. These struggles eventually toppled the government of Sánchez de Lozada, and were successful, I contend, because of the spatial repertoires of struggle drawn from the role of the FEJUVE-El Alto as a territorial organisation involved in the (self-)organisation and construction of the city.

In chapter 6, I began my argument by sketching out the demographics and economic structure of the city, and placing the social organisations studied in context. Importantly, I traced processes of class formation in the popular economy and examined the emergence of a new commercial bourgeoisie. This formed the backdrop to my discussions of passive revolution and allowed me to address the class component always present in the revolution-restoration dialectic of passive revolution. I did likewise in chapter 7, arguing the adverse historical and political economic conditions faced by the working-classes in Santa Cruz limit the scope for political struggle. This context shaped the political strategies available to the *cruceña* working-classes, leading me to conclude that working-class movements here have never surpassed economic corporatism and moved into definite political action. In the case of the market vendors of Plan 3000, the lack of engagement of the MAS in Santa Cruz has led to a large-scale loss of electoral support. However, rather than groups turning to other political parties, the moving of the market shows how this shift has contributed to the continuation of a general political inactivity amongst the working-class rank-and-file, and how the social organisation leadership has turned to other, more pragmatic means to achieve political goals. At the same time, this lack of rank-and-file action has allowed some leaders to promote or sabotage projects or construct relationships with the local political and economic elite for their own political interests. Even in the cases where the leadership are trying to transform society, they are obligated to do so within the confines of people's everyday routines and the technocratic responses of the state, leaving the fundamental pillars of society unchanged and unchallenged, forcing leaders to try and replace the radical action of the rank-and-file.

Political economic considerations of class elucidate the balance of forces underpinning the dynamics of passive revolution in urban Bolivia. These dynamics are, I admit, quite distinct from the rural dynamics of transformism, co-optation, clientelism and the second incorporation experiences by rural communities and peasant and indigenous movements. However, my aim was never to address the

government of Evo Morales in its totality. Rather, it was to analyse the processes of state formation, class formation and the production of space in urban Bolivia in the progressive cycle that began with neoliberalism and its crises during the 1990s. My analysis points to complex state-society relations and processes of co-optation, incorporation and inclusion that are always incomplete and that are constantly being contested. The frame of passive revolution captures the wider panorama of the Pink Tide, and so is a useful as a theoretical tool, but it alone is inadequate to properly capture the underlying dynamics of left-wing governments, which are shaped by class struggle, as well as historical processes of state formation and the production of space.

List of Sources

Formal Interviews

Most interviews lasted between 20 minutes and an hour, although a handful were shorter and a handful longer. They were, with a couple of exceptions, recorded, transcribed and analysed using NVivo.

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2. José Manuel Ormachea, 'Bolivia Dice No' campaign, 08/03/2016
3. Jose Luis Alvarez Beltrán, POR and Executive Secretary of Teachers Trade-Union Federation of La Paz, 08/03/2016
4. Fernanda Wanderley, academic, CIDES-UMSA, 09/03/2016
5. Maximo Gallego, national leader, CONAMAQ-orgánico, 10/03/2016
6. Javier Lara Lara, national leader, CONAMAQ-orgánico, 10/03/2016
7. Juan Arturo Juro, national leader, Trade-Union Confederation of the Interculturals of Bolivia, CSIOB (formerly the Colonisers), 14/03/2016
8. Lucio Gonzales Athenes, former national leader, COB, 15/03/2016
9. Víctor Cabezas Valencia, General Secretary, CSIOB, 15/03/2016
10. Dionicio Cabrera Chura, national leader, CSUTCB, 17/03/2016
11. Manuel Morales Alvarez, Constituent Assembly participant and independent scholar, 30/03/2016
12. Filemón Escobar, ex-Trade-Union leader and MAS founder, 03/04/2016
13. Juan de la Cruz Villca, ex-leader, CSUTCB/COB, and MAS technocrat, 06/04/2016
14. Ricardo Calla, academic, University of the Cordillera, 06/04/2016
15. Marcos Llanos, local youth activist, Fejuve 2003, 12/04/2016
16. Félix Muruchi, academic, UPEA, ex-FEJUVE-El Alto leader, 18/04/2016
17. Anon., District 12, FEJUVE-El Alto, 18/04/2016
18. Anon., District 8, FEJUVE-El Alto, 18/04/2016
19. Hermógenes Chambi, District 7, FEJUVE-El Alto, 18/04/2016
20. Julian and Alepo, District 2, FEJUVE-El Alto, 18/04/2016
21. Alfonso Ramos Chino, FEJUVE-El Alto, 18/04/2016
22. Fernando Garces, social investigator, CIS, 19/04/2016

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27. Carlos Arce Vargas, social investigator, CEDLA, 04/05/2016
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31. Nico Tassi, anthropologist, CIS, 11/05/2016
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39. Paulino Gil Mamani, Executive Secretary, FEJUVE-El Alto Concuta, 03/06/2016
40. José, Federation of los fabriles La Paz/ENATEX worker, 03/06/2016
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42. Aurelio Ambrocio Muruchi, lawyer and CONAMAQ activist, 18/06/2016
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46. José Luis Theura Marca, COD-La Paz, 24/06/2016
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48. Natavidad Gónzalez, Plante, 30/06/2016
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51. Eliana Isabel Zorrilthe Zegarro, national leader, Caja National de Salud CNS, Nation Health Fund, 06/07/2016

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65. Benigno Nino, Executive Secretary, Transport Union 'Arco Iris', 14/11/2016
66. Sebastian Condori Ramirez, Secretary of Communications, COR-El Alto, 15/11/2016
67. Edwin Navas, Secretary of Conflicts, Mixed Transport Trade-Union 'Eduardo Avaroa', 22/11/2016
68. Andres Patón Agramont, Secretary of Relations, Transport Trade-Union Federation of La Paz, 01/12/2016
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77. Christian Zeballos, President, Association 'Flor de Mayo la Única', Plan 3000, 02/02/2017
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